

By Russell Dark 1975

Chapter One

DEDICATION

It was an ideal day for the extensive celebration which had been planned to start about 9 A. M. at Westport near the Clatsop county line. An air of expectancy hung over Oregon's oldest permanent settlement as downtown Astoria stores locked their doors for the day and school children ran whooping through the streets, overjoyed at an extra day of freedom.

A crowd began to gather before noon at the Scow Bay railroad station. So many important visitors were expected that local celebrities were almost overlooked in the throng which awaited arrival of the Spokane, Portland & Seattle special train. 1898

The train was scheduled to stop at Westport for 15 minutes but the time extended to half an hour while Julius Meier, Portland merchant prince and good roads advocate, rolled up his sleeves and took the reins of a six-horse team. C. C. Chapman, representing Gov. "Oz" West, grabbed the handles of a plow and with Meier driving plowed a wavering furrow, the first ground broken in Clatsop county for the proposed Columbia river highway.

When the train reached Astoria, hundreds of people clambered aboard for the brief ride across Youngs bay to Flavel where W. W. Clark, general manager of the contracting firm, stood at the controls of a pile driver.

William Haga, a wagon maker at Lovell Auto Co. in Astoria, had organized a band and had been warming up his musicians all morning for the feature event of the day which was to take place in late afternoon. His music would have to be loud this day to compete with with the Columbia Theater Drum Corps under the direction of Louis Kinkela.

The day had all the elements of a four ring circus.

The ground breaking ceremony at Westport was to be followed by the driving of the first piling of the giant new terminal at Flavel. That was the site Louis Hill, president of Great Northern railroad, had selected for the largest railway terminal on the west coast. Next would come the driving of piling at the foot of Ninth street in Astoria to mark the beginning of the city's first public boat landing.

And finally, the feature attraction, the driving of the first piling in Smith cove where a group of dreamers hoped to establish the world's greatest seaport, the Port of Astoria. The date was June 3, 1914, a day Astorians would long remember.

On a grassy expanse in front of the Flavel hotel, Clifford Barlow, president of the Warrenton Development League, acted as master of ceremonies, greeting distinguished visitors from all parts of the northwest. L. C. Gilman, president of the S. P. & S. railroad, was there as were Mayor P. H. Kuhn of Hammond, Mayor George Schmidt of Warrenton, Gabriel Wingate, vice president of the Port of Astoria, and Julius L. Meier, later to be governor of Oregon.

Telegrams of congratulation were received from many nationally known figures. A. J. McEarhern, president of the Seattle firm which was to build many wooden ships during the coming world war, was to drive the first piling at Flavel. The Boosters club had come all the way from Spokane to provide an al fresco luncheon on the lawn of the Flavel hotel.

The speeches at Flavel were mercifully short and by 3:45 P.M. the entire party was back aboard the special train for the short trip back to Astoria.

Planks rattled on the Taylor Ave. trestle as the few Model A Fords rattled out from downtown Astoria toward Smith point. The street level was 20 feet above the mud flats. Hundreds of people walked the ties to the Point and by 4 P.M. the crowd was estimated at 10,000, there to see the first piling driven to begin Pier 1, Port of Astoria.

Prominent among those present was F. J. Walsh, port engineer, who had designed the facility, and workmen from the contracting firm, Guthrie and McDougal. With them was W. C. Logan, chairman of the reclamation commission which was planning to erect a bulkhead along the Astoria waterfront. The area behind it would be filled with sand from the river bottom.

Here again the ceremony was brief. The piling went down smoothly and soon the celebrants retired to the new and ornate Weinhard-Astoria hotel at Twelfth and Duane streets where additional refreshments were provided.

Despite the largest assemblage Astoria had ever known, Chief Leb Carlson and his officers reported only one arrest during the day.

Astoria was not without piers along the waterfront. Deep water vessels had been calling for years at the Hammond mill to load lumber destined for all parts of the world. The O. R. & N. dock at the foot of Seventeenth street served as a landing place for river boats from Portland and the Ross-Higgins and Callender wharves handled constant traffic. Even Capt. George Flavel's old pier at the foot of Eighth street was still in use although it was in a poor state of repair.

At the evening banquet in the Weinhard-Astoria, the principal speaker was Marshall Dana, editor of the Oregon Journal.

"Puget Sound did 62 per cent of the shipping business on the west coast last year," boomed the orator. "The natural advantage belongs to the Columbia river."

The audience came to its feet, cheering wildly.

The idea of establishing a public port at Astoria was not a new concept; it had been germinating for a number of years and there had been a great deal of talk along the waterfront as to the best means of implementing the facility.

No concerted action was taken, however, until January, 1908, when the Astoria Chamber of Commerce selected a committee to make a study of port possibilities. The committee was to report back on the feasibility of establishing such a port. At the evening meeting of

January 30, the Chamber adopted the committee's report by a unanimous vote.

The report outlined the size of the proposed port with the stipulation that Warrenton and Flavel, then known as "the west side," be asked if they wanted to be included.

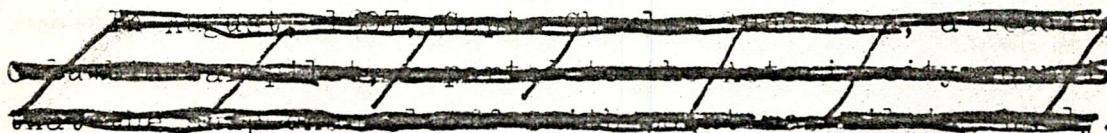
The second provision urged that the constitution of the city of Astoria be amended to permit the city to take part in formation of a port district.

Provision No. 3 recommended that bonds be issued and sold to finance harbor improvement.

Provision No. 4 called for the appointment of seven responsible citizens to serve as members of a harbor committee, each member to serve a 10-year term without pay. Replacement members would be elected by vote of the people.

The committee report was signed by Gabriel Wingate, mining engineer and investor, and James W. Welch. A. M. Smith, the attorney who had been active in preparation of the report, was unable to attend the meeting. He would, however, draft the bill for introduction at the 1909 session of the legislature calling for creation of a port.

Capt. Charles Gunderson, a leading Columbia bar pilot, had reported in 1907 that the channel off Smith point was silting badly. The mud flats which extended along the city's waterfront tended to become odorous garbage dumps which the tides did not always wash out to sea. Agitation for erecting a bulkhead and filling in the tide flats had begun as early as 1905. Little was done about it until formation in 1913 of several reclamation districts along the waterfront.



Members of the Astoria Chamber of Commerce had become much concerned that same year over plans of Louis Hill, president of Great Northern railroad, to establish a giant shipping terminal across the bay at Flavel. They feared that the new development might draw off some of the commerce which was then being handled in Astoria.

On Oct. 15, 1907, Hill announced that his company had

purchased a large block of land in the Flavel area for \$800,000. This was the development begun ten years before by the Flavel Development Co. and included Tansy point where the 50-foot river channel washed against the shore.

Ocean traffic in and out of the Columbia river was still moving slowly under the influence of the financial panic of 1907 which had virtually halted commercial shipping.

Attempts of the Astorians to form a port district was based on an act of the Oregon legislature which was recorded with the secretary of state on Feb. 12, 1909.

The Astorians filed a petition on Oct. 27, 1908, asking the legislature to pass an act based on the Chamber of Commerce committee report. The act which the legislature finally passed greatly enlarged the original concept and gave any municipal corporation the right to be designated a port in any county bordering on rivers or bays navigable to the sea.

The act also set up machinery by which a special election could be held to create a port district.

The port district would have power to improve bays, rivers and harbors within its limits to such a depth as might be necessary or convenient for the use of shipping. It would be empowered to contract with the federal government to complete such work and to establish tug service and pilotage between itself and the sea.

It would have the power to borrow money, to sell and dispose of bonds up to 10 per cent of its assessed value and the power to levy and collect taxes. As outlined in the legislative act, the port authority would be composed of a five-man commission, all members of which would be qualified voters and residents of the proposed district.

The port committee of the Chamber of Commerce met Nov. 19 in the director's room of the First National bank of Astoria and laid plans to levy a tax of one and a half mills, expected to raise a fund of \$5000. This money would be used to hire a competent engineer who would draw up plans for the proposed district, covering the area

between Tongue Point and the sea. On that same day, Gov. Frank W. Benson appointed five men as members of the Port of Nehalem commission.

An unexpected attack came on Nov. 23 from Astoria's city attorney, Charles H. Abercrombie. He insisted that the port act had not been adopted legally and questioned the authority of the port committee to lay plans for a tax levy.

The committee continued, however, to plan for a special election to be held Jan 28, 1910. The petition calling for the election included all of Clatsop county in the proposed port district with the northern border extending along the mid-channel line of the Columbia river.

On election day, voters of the county approved formation of Astoria port district by an overwhelming majority. Jewell, Elsie and Push precincts were not recorded in early returns due to transportation difficulties but the city vote was 680 to 42 in favor of the measure. Of 1098 votes cast, 920 favored creation of the port district, only 178 were opposed. No ballots were recorded in Clifton precinct.

On Feb. 9, 1910, Gov. Benson appointed the members of the first board of commissioners for the new port.

Named from Astoria were Samuel Elmore, cannery operator; John Fox of the Clatsop mill, and Chris Schmidt, owner of fish freezing plants in Astoria and Alaska. Charles Lester of Warrenton and Alexander Gilbert, Seaside realtor, were the remaining members.

At the first meeting of the group, held Feb. 14 in a cubbyhole in the Clatsop county court house, members began to realize the problems which faced them. There was no comprehensive plan in existence for the world shipping terminal they visualized, no funds were immediately available, and as yet no site for the port had been selected although several had been suggested. The first problem, and the most pressing, was the selection of a port engineer capable of planning the facility and then carrying out the plans.

In the meantime, the Chamber of Commerce promotion committee began a campaign to raise \$50,000 to construct

a flour mill in Astoria. Shares were sold at \$5 each, with any one investor being limited to \$200.

Judge Frank J. Taylor, manager of the original Taylor estate, offered to donate a site at Smith cove free of charge which may have influenced the port commissioners later in their choice of a site for the Port of Astoria.

Construction of the flour mill was virtually a certainty by March 23, when Nels Enge, a flour miller from Minneapolis offered to invest \$50,000 in the project if Astoria would provide matching funds. The Chamber committee continued to sell shares in the proposed mill with the slogan "A Share In Every Home."

An immediate problem was the unfavorable rate on grain shipments which permitted growers east of the mountains to ship their products to Puget Sound ports or to Portland elevators cheaper than they could ship to Astoria. Then, too, there was no grain storage facility available in the Astoria area. The problem of a favorable shipping rate would be taken up immediately with the Interstate Commerce Commission.

But it would be four years before construction would actually begin on the physical plant of the port, years filled with financial mismanagement, violent opposition and frustration. There was also growing opposition from the Port of Portland which had taken over pilotage on the Columbia river bar.

Depth of the river channel from Portland to the sea was a tender subject and Portland merchants resented any threat to their commerce from the young upstart port at the mouth of the river.

In this 60th year of the Port of Astoria's operation, this resentment still surfaces from time to time.

Chapter Two

ACQUISITION

Despite the eagerness with which Astorians accepted the idea of a world port on their waterfront, affairs of the Port of Astoria remained in the doldrums during the remainder of 1910.

The inexperienced commissioners met dutifully once a month and chatted idly of plans for the future but there was little action.

Alexander Gilbert, the Seaside realtor, was wrapped up in Seaside city politics and the Astoria members had their own fish to can. Often it was impossible to obtain a quorum as the members were inclined to take off for Portland or Seattle as the spirit moved them.

Byron Stone, president of the Astoria Chamber of Commerce, named a flour mill committee in May with Frank Patton, bank cashier, as chairman. Other members were A. D. Skyles, T. L. Ball, A. W. Norblad, J. E. Gratke, C. M. Celler, B. F. Crawshaw, J. T. Ross, Charles V. Brown, Albert Dunbar and E. M. Cherry.

On May 5, the Astoria city council voted to limit to 50 the number of saloons in the city and a month later the flour committee announced that the construction fund was still short by \$5000.

Port commission members were shocked to learn on June 23 of the death of one of the original members of the body, Samuel Elmore.

The wealthy cannery operator had moved to Pasadena and died in the wreck of his automobile. His will was probated on July 13 and on the 31st memorial services were held in Astoria with most of the business houses closing their doors for a half day.

Ross, Higgins & Co. and Fisher Bros. warehouses at the foot of Fourteenth St. were destroyed by fire on Aug. 4, bringing out the fact that Astoria had no protection

from fire along the waterfront. The Port of Portland had promised the use of the tugs Wallula and Oneonta as fire boats but both were towing on the bar when the blaze broke out.

Of interest to keepers of boarding houses along Astor street was the drop to \$10 of the price paid by ship masters for delivery of a sailor aboard. Only a year before, the fee had been \$90. It was no longer profitable to shanghai bodies along the waterfront.

On Sept. 10, Major James McIndoe told members of the Port of Portland commission it would cost \$3,250,000 to dredge the channel between Astoria and Portland and that no such sum had been appropriated. The dredge Chinook, a converted army transport, was equipped with a new wireless set and went back to work on the Columbia bar after working upriver for many months.

Tacoma announced plans to build a \$100 million terminal on Oct. 4, Seattle began a huge port project, and Port of Portland commissioners laid plans to construct a public dock.

Port of Astoria commissioners wrote to Washington for a new set of charts of the estuary. The state attorney general ruled that the Port of Portland had no legal right to take over pilotage on the Columbia bar since the body was unincorporated. Members incorporated the following day.

One bright spot of the year came on Nov. 21 when the Weinhard-Astoria hotel opened its doors for the first time. The richly paneled mahogany barroom provided a suitable haven for off duty business men and tired port commissioners.

The year 1911 proved not very much better for the fledgling port. Thomas Linville was named Astoria chief of police and on Jan. 9 the Washington legislature voted to buy Sand Island at the mouth of the river. This sandy, grass covered bit of land had been moving northward ever since it had been ceded to the government in 1860 as the site of a fort that was never built. There was possibility that it might come under jurisdiction of the Port of Astoria if the north channel was accepted as the port's

boundary.

On Jan. 12, Washington state offered Oregon \$20,000 for the island which had become a valuable seining ground.

Another Astoria dream drifted off into the blue on Aug. 15 when Nels Enge, the angel of the proposed flour mill, declared bankruptcy in Minneapolis. He listed assets of \$91,771 and liabilities of \$158,058. A week later, Chief Linville was suspended for 30 days for collecting an unlevied tax from the "dance halls" along Astor street. E. M. Houghton replaced him on Sept. 6.

In November, Gov. West offered to furnish convicts to operate a rock crusher at Tongue Point where the county was obtaining gravel for roads.

The Shipowners Association of the Pacific Coast made its first attack on the Astoria port's authority on Nov. 14 when it attempted to eliminate Astoria as a port of entry for ships headed for Portland.

During a sudden burst of energy that evening, the Port of Astoria commissioners created the position of harbor master and named Frank Keating of Keating Navigation Co. to the post. An ordinance passed gave him the authority to make arrests without a warrant and provided fines of \$10 to \$300 for violations of port regulations. So far, the only regulation on the books was one which forbade dumping of garbage on mud flats along the waterfront.

The Chinese garbage collectors were recycling garbage through their three pig farms, known as Charlie One, Two and Three. These were located south of Smith point, across the hill at Williamsport and above Hauke's store in Uppertown.

Woe be to the careless housewife who dropped a tin can in her garbage pail; she was placed immediately on the permanent Chinese blacklist.

On Jan. 2, 1912, the port commissioners hired a Seattle engineer, P.W. Whitham, to develop plans for Astoria harbor and at the same meeting elected as president George B. McLeod of Portland whom they had

named to replace Sam Elmore.

On Jan. 5, Paul Kearney was named Clatsop county sheriff and on the 25th, George McLeod filed for election to the commission post he held on a temporary basis. Alexander Gilbert and Charles Lester filed for reelection a week later.

Engineer Whitham arrived in Astoria on Feb. 12 and the following day began walking east from Ft. Stevens. He circled Youngs bay on foot and arrived at Tongue Point late that evening, tired but full of ideas.

That same week, Alex Frederickson was given a contract to build a wharf at Tongue Point, to erect gravel bunkers at the quarry, and to build bunkhouses. the 40 x 18 bunkhouses were to shelter 18 convictees under Gov. West's work release program.

The Oregon Journal came out March 20 strongly in favor of railroad rate parity for Astoria and on the same day Gabriel Wingate and D. H. Welch filed for election to the port commission.

Meeting on April 12, the commission adopted a second rule for the harbor master to enforce. Henceforward, ships would be permitted to anchor for one hour only between Smith and Tongue points.

Engineer Whitham and his assistant, H. W. Davies, disclosed a grandiose plan for development of Astoria harbor which left the commissioners stunned.

He visualized 19 miles of wharves extending from Tansy point to Tongue point with a vast mooring basin in Youngs bay for idle ships. He said the beginning costs would not be prohibitive and urged an immediate start on the first of the wharves. The commissioners took his plan under advisement.

The meeting of port commissioners on July 28, 1913, was marked by the resignation of John Fox, president of Astoria Iron Works, from the commission and his replacement by George W. Sanborn.

Commissioner Fox was regretful but he had arranged to transfer his operation to Seattle and his family

already was in residence there.

The Army Corps of Engineers was stalled on designation of a pier head line which would enable the port to proceed with planning and the city of Astoria to begin construction of a waterfront bulkhead.

On Aug. 4, The Ports of the Columbia association, headed by Dr. Alfred Kinney, met in Astoria to urge action on improvements at the mouth of the river. The port commission met the following day and members voted to issue \$800,000 in gold coupon negotiable bonds to enable them to acquire a port site and finance the building of wharves and warehouses. Impending opening of the Panama canal, with the vast increase in sea commerce it was expected to produce, was the factor which forced the commission's hand.

The bonds were to be issued in denominations of \$500 and \$1000 and were to bear five per cent interest. The entire sum was to be amortized over a period of 30 years. To keep an eye on the changing shipping affairs, the commissioners voted to meet every Tuesday at 9:30 A. M.

The Astoria Sanitary and Reclamation Commission voted on Aug. 7 to issue \$100,000 in bonds to finance construction of a bulkhead along the waterfront. That same day, the Army Engineers announced that the south jetty was completed after being under construction since 1885. The rock barrier jutted westward seven miles from Ft. Stevens.

Port authorities were greatly interested since they believed the jetty would scour out a deeper channel across the bar and thus permit larger ships to reach Astoria. The depth at low water was measured at 28 feet, hardly enough to permit entrance of the ships they expected following the opening of the Panama canal.

On Aug. 16, the city of Astoria contracted with Palmberg & Wentjar to build the Taylor Ave. trestle along the waterfront to Smith point.

Announcement of the port bond issue brought immediate response from a number of public spirited citizens and an offer from the Warren Estate to sell the port a

a dock site at Warrenton.

The Van Dusen brothers, B. and A. G., offered to donate 1500 feet of frontage on Cathlamet bay, east of Tongue Point, as a site for the proposed docks. D. H. Welch said he would give 20 acres on the east side of Tongue Point, where the Maritime Administration would anchor its reserve fleet many years later.

The Warren Estate Co. offered to provide 1000 feet of frontage on the Columbia river and 2000 feet along the Skipanon with a 90-day free option. The Estate wanted \$10 a foot for the property.

Probably influenced by its proximity to the site of the proposed flour mill, the commissioners voted on Aug. 26 to purchase a fourth alternate site, located at Smith cove.

Late in the afternoon of that day, the commissioners gave \$500 to O. W. Taylor as a down payment for 1700 feet of river frontage at the cove. The total purchase price was to be \$51,000 and would include 40 acres of tide flat and water between the ship channel and Taylor Ave.

Commissioner Gabriel Wingate voted against the purchase, explaining he thought the current around Smith Point was too strong to permit berthing of ships. Commissioner George Sanborn brought the matter to a vote when he declared that it was time to stop stalling and that enough time had been wasted. The cost of the site was worked out at \$30 per square foot.

Members of the commission visualized two piers on the site, each 200 feet wide, with a 300-foot slip between. Warehouses would be erected on both piers and berthing space would be provided for six vessels.

While the commission was concerning itself with purchase of a port site, Attorney G. C. Fulton had filed a suit with the Interstate Commerce Commission demanding for Astoria the common point railroad rates enjoyed by Seattle and Tacoma.

"The present rates are relics of a day when railroads were allowed to build up one community at the expense of

another," Fulton declared. "These rates are not justified either in law or morals." The Reclamation Commission offered its bulkhead bonds for sale on the following day.

The contract to build the Taylor Ave. trestle was declared illegal on the 28th on the ground that the work to be done was not described in sufficient detail. Meanwhile, Dr. Kinney had received letters from all of the upriver cities endorsing his association's plan to improve shipping conditions at the mouth of the river. Time was running short since the money appropriated by congress to keep the dredge Chinook working on the bar was due to run out June 30.

Major McIndoe had proposed additional appropriations but as yet congress had done nothing except authorize funds to start construction of the north jetty. McIndoe told port commissioners on Sept. 10 he had found some additional funds and would keep the Chinook on the bar as long as possible.

On Sept. 11, George C. Flavel filed suit for an injunction to halt sale of the bulkhead bonds. He said the bulkhead project would cost too much. Flavel owned large blocks of property along the waterfront against which the bulkhead cost would be levied.

The city council had postponed replacement of planking on downtown streets in expectation of filling in the tide flats beneath them and members were dismayed at Flavel's action.

On the same day, A. B. Hammond sold a section of his waterfront property to E. L. Smith Co. of Pendleton as a site for a flour mill. The site sold for \$6000 and the first unit of the mill was expected to produce 250 barrels of flour a day. Aiding in the deal was a group made up of George Sanborn, Frank Patton, G. C. Fulton and Frank Parker.

The Astoria city council decided on Sept. 12 that it would cost more to replace the street planking than it would to build a bulkhead and named a committee to confer with George Flavel.

Government engineers announced that the Panama canal, to be opened later in the year, would have a minimum channel depth of 41 feet. The Columbia bar was only 28 feet deep at low tide.

The commissioners were still casting about for means of keeping the Chinook at work on the bar when a brutal murder by gunfire shocked all of Clatsop county.

Chapter Three

CONSTRUCTION

A friendly suit filed by R. M. Wooden and others in June, 1913, to determine the legality of the port election was finally settled on July 29 when Circuit Judge J.U. Campbell ruled in favor of the port.

On Aug. 6, the port commissioners approved ordinance No. 1 in which they declared their intention to issue bonds for the purpose of building a port facility. They also announced that options had been secured on property near the Hammond mill and on 1000 feet of frontage in the west end of town.

Retired Circuit Judge Frank J. Taylor, administrator of the Taylor estate and the man who had offered to donate a site for the proposed flour mill, closed his office at noon on Sept. 13, 1913. It was his intention to catch the afternoon train to Carnahan station, his home south of Warrenton.

Judge Taylor had retired from the bench and as one of the west coast's most respected attorneys was now serving as president of the Oregon State Board of Pilots.

As he stepped up on the platform at the Scow Bay railroad station, a man leaped from behind the building and drilled the jurist through the left eye with a .44 slug. Taylor died instantly. As the body slumped to the planking, the crazed slayer pumped two more bullets into the judge's chest.

The killer was Oswald C. Hansel, Taylor's neighbor on Clatsop plains. There had been bad blood between the two men ever since the judge had represented Hansel's wife in a divorce action four years before.

Hansel was dragged to the city jail, claiming he could remember nothing of the incident, and was booked on a charge of first degree murder.

The following day, George C. Flavel was persuaded by

the Chamber of Commerce committee to withdraw his suit for an injunction.

C. B. Stout, an experienced miller and one of the stockholders, was named on Sept. 19 to manage the new flour mill following its completion.

A jury was empaneled on the 25th to hear the evidence against Hansel and after two days of deliberation the Clatsop Plains man was found guilty of murder in the first degree. He was sentenced to hang on Nov. 14.

Major James McIndoe, the Army Engineer who had become a staunch supporter of the plan to dredge the Columbia bar, received orders on Oct. 1 transferring him to Manila. The Astoria Chamber of Commerce protested to no avail.

The head miller of the new flour mill, A. C. Barron, predicted that the mill would turn out 350 barrels of flour a day and that the name of the operating firm would be Astoria Flour & Grain Co. This would be changed a few weeks later.

State Senator Charles F. Lester of Warrenton, one of the original members of the port commission, died suddenly on Oct. 21. The other commissioners delayed selecting a replacement.

On Oct. 27, Hansel's attorney filed an appeal with the state supreme court and the flour mill manager, C. A. Stout, arrived in Astoria. On the same day, Leander Lebeck drove the first of the piling which was to support the Taylor Ave. trestle.

Morris Investment Co. of Portland offered on Nov. 1 to purchase the Astoria port bonds at par plus the cost of printing them but the offer was refused. A week later, the port's bond attorneys, Storey, Thorndike, Palmer and Dodge of Boston pronounced the bond issue legal and the bonds in order.

At the same meeting during which the favorable bond report was received, the commissioners named as engineers the Portland firm of Newell, Gossett and Walsh to plan the port's wharves. F. J. Walsh was later to devote all of his time to the project.

Meanwhile the Sanitary and Reclamation Commission began acquiring a right of way along the waterfront between Ninth and 23d streets preparatory to erecting the proposed bulkhead.

Lt. Col. Charles McKinstry replaced Major McIndoe as district engineer on Nov. 20 and the ousted major told friends he planned to sail for his new post at Manila on Dec. 5.

Port commissioners asked the city council on Dec. 2 to extend Astor street westward from Ninth street to the port entrance and altered the overall port plan to include coal bunkers and oil tanks for servicing ships they anticipated would call.

When bids were opened at the Dec. 9 meeting for the construction of the Smith cove piers, only one bid was received, that of a Seattle firm, Weil, Roth & Co.

"Their bid is too low even to discuss, commented Chairman McLeod.

On Dec. 16, the commissioners added plans for a modern grain elevator to the port concept and instructed Engineer Walsh to draw up the plans. Walsh had hired the firm of Birch & Jacobsen to make preliminary surveys and that firm began driving test piling at the port site on Dec. 30.

Rep. George Chamberlain telegraphed the commissioners on Jan 6, 1914, that he had persuaded a reluctant congress to appropriate funds for construction of a monster dredge for work on the Columbia bar. His announcement proved to be premature.

Better news came on Jan. 8 when Chapman, Mills & Co. of Chicago notified the commission that they would take \$400,000 of the port bonds at 96 cents. The money was to be made available by April 1.

The government dredge Col. P. S. Michie interrupted her maiden voyage to station at Coos Bay to work a week on the Columbia bar, reported by mariners to be silting badly. The Michie was the vessel on which Capt. Martin West, bar pilot and a member of the port commission,

would many years later gain his first experience at sea.

On Jan. 10, the steamer Anna Cummings arrived at Astoria with 10,000 sacks of wheat aboard for the new flour mill and the combined service clubs of Astoria sent a memorial to congress asking for construction of a dredge for the Columbia bar. The Oregon Manufacturers Association endorsed Astoria's plea for parity in railroad rates.

Attorney G. C. Fulton filed a complaint with the Interstate Commerce Commission on Jan 21 in which the city of Astoria accused ten railroads of discrimination in setting of railroad freight rates.

Mayor Preston Kuhn of Hammond appeared at the meeting of Jan. 27 to ask the port's aid in halting storm erosion which was threatening to wash his city into the bay. The commissioners had assembled in the Chamber of Commerce rooms to consider purchase of additional land and to review plans for a grain elevator. On Feb. 7, port authorities were notified that the War Department opposed construction of a dredge for the Columbia bar on the ground that the money was not available. The bar situation became acute two days later when the Standard Oil tanker Richmond found it impossible to enter the river due to shallow water. The Richmond drew only 28 feet.

Engineer Walsh arrived to stay on Feb. 16 and the following day began to draw plans for 525 feet of 60-foot trestle to extend between the shoreline and Pier 1, the first unit of the port, which was still in the planning stage.

On the 17th, O. W. Taylor offered to sell a 700 x 1000 foot tract west of the port site for \$35,500. The commissioners conferred briefly in a corner of the room and decided to take an option on the property.

The commissioners met again on Feb. 20 in a store-room on Commissioner Sanborn's dock at the foot of Ninth street. This was to be their home until a port office building was erected at Smith cove.

It was in this warehouse that they signed the first port construction contract a week later. Leander Lebeck

was low bidder for construction of a 60-foot roadway out from the cove. Lebeck offered to build the trestle for \$8.75 a lineal foot if hemlock construction was specified, \$9 if the commissioners wanted him to use fir. They chose hemlock.

The outer end of the south jetty was reported on Feb. 25 to be settling slowly into the sea, leaving a series of stone islands barely visible at high tide.

That same evening, the ubiquitous dentist, Dr. Alfred Kinney, brought 300 of his adherents together in the Weinhard-Astoria hotel to form a booster club to urge action at the mouth of the river. Their main concern was to be improvement of the Columbia river bar.

The new port's first financial skirmish began at the meeting of commissioners on March 2 when Frank Patton, commission treasurer, reported that his bank could not afford to pay interest on the port's funds. Patton was cashier of the Astoria Savings Bank and the port's capital in the amount of \$330,000, reposed in the vault over which he presided, drawing no interest.

The port attorney, G. C. Fulton, had advised Patton of the serious penalties involved for "loaning" money owned by a public body. In Fulton's opinion, placing the funds at interest constituted a loan.

The cashiers of Astoria National Bank and the Scandinavian Bank offered two per cent interest on any sum over \$10,000 which the port might have on deposit at the end of each month. They demanded that the huge sum be divided equally among the city's banks. Gabriel Wingate, acting commission chairman was alone in supporting this move. The banks asked for an opinion from the state attorney-general.

At the same meeting, the commissioners approved plans of a 50 x 70 office building to be erected at the entrance to the port.

George Sanborn announced on March 5 that he had had enough and would not run for reelection. Personality clashes

had enlivened each meeting of the port commissioners.

Final touches were being given to machinery at the new flour mill on March 9 when the Oregon Journal published an editorial declaring that "a common point rate is Astoria's need of the hour."

The commissioners voted on March 10 to leave the port's funds in custody of Frank Patton without interest and placed him under bond of \$25,000.

President Smith of the Astoria Flour Milling Co., its new name, announced on March 11 that the first sack of flour produced would be auctioned off and that the fund thus realized would be donated for a children's playground.

On March 14, Attorney-general Crawford reversed G. C. Fulton's opinion and instructed the commissioners to deposit the port's money in interest bearing accounts.

Patton paid out \$2631.58 on March 17 as part of the port's \$25,000 contribution toward improvement of the river entrance. The Port of Portland was to make an unwilling contribution of \$450,000 for the same purpose. A payment of \$3255.10 went to the city of Astoria as the port's share in construction of the Taylor Ave. trestle.

It had been 40 years since Capt. J.N. Teal brought the steamer Willamette Chief down river with a cargo of wheat but flour mill officials let it be known that this commerce was about to be resumed on a regular basis.

Port commissioners asked for an extension of the pierhead line but the request was denied by the Army Engineers unless each individual land owner could show cause.

On March 27, the commissioners accepted Walsh's plan for construction of two piers at the port. The first unit, Pier 1, was to extend 1000 feet into the river at right angles to the shoreline. There had been some testimony that the piers should be parallel to the shore. The second unit was to be 890 feet long.

Also voted was a memorial to congress requesting free passage of coastwise trade through the Panama

canal. Astorians of this period were great believers in memorials.

The commissioners made another bold move in April when they hired O. W. Taylor to be the port's industrial representative. Taylor was president of Gearhart Land Co. and of the Smith Point Development Co. and had inherited a large portion of Taylor's original Astoria, a donation land claim. Taylor was instructed to scout around the northwest for future business and to advise the port on financial affairs.

One would believe that his employment was timely since the commissioners were considering purchase of his property and may have expected more favored treatment to result.

The first three convicts, accompanied by a guard, arrived April 14 to work on the Tongue Point stone quarry. The Reclamation Commission asked for bids on their \$100,000 bond issue. Filling of the tide flats along Astoria's waterfront was expected to take two years.

Dr. Alfred Kinney's booster group came up with a Columbia bar slogan which they chanted at every opportunity.

"Nothing less than 40 feet

Where rail and water meet."

The meter was not of the best but the enthusiasm of the 500 members may have had some influence on a distant congress. The Reclamation Commission announced plans to pump sand under Duane street as its first project and to follow that by replacing the Commercial street trestle with a sandy foundation.

Astoria Flouring Mills was incorporated April 1, 1914, for \$100,000. E. L. Smith, C. B. Stout and Edgar Smith were listed as owners. Another 10,000 sacks of wheat arrived down river that morning and was stored in the mill's new five-story elevator.

Tests at the Smith cove site showed that silt was accumulating in the channel and around the test piling. As a result, Engineer Walsh was instructed to contact the Port of Portland regarding purchase of the dredge Port-

land, a 130-foot vessel built in 1899. The Portland had 20-inch pipes, a 600-horse engine for suction, and was for sale for \$60,000.

The Navy had issued a notice that two drydocks would be stationed on the west coast, one of them at San Francisco, and on the 25th Chairman McLeod wired Washington in an attempt to secure one for the Port of Astoria. Seattle got the drydock.

Three days later, a committee from the Astoria central labor council called on the port commissioners with a demand that no Chinese, East Indians, Hindus or Mongolians would be employed when the port went into operation. The Hammond sawmill had just fired its crew of Hindus and replaced them with workers of Scandinavian descent. The commissioners agreed to the demand.

The dredge Columbia, which had been working in the north channel off Sand Island, was moved across the river on May 2 and began chewing on the shoaled channel at Tongue Point. Engineers noted an immediate increase in silt at the port site.

Engineer Walsh estimated on May 5 that Pier 1, first unit of the port complex, would require 8000 piling. He began a survey the same day of an extension route for Astor street from Ninth street westward to the port. The east end of Taylor Ave. over Uniontown hill was apt to be muddy and almost impassable during rainy weather.

Pacific Power & Light Co. promised to extend street carservice east to Alderbrook and west up Alameda Ave. to the summit of Smith point.

Completion of the new flour mill called for an all-day celebration on April 12. President Edgar Smith of Astoria Flouring Mills delivered a short address in the afternoon and Bill Haga's band played far into the night.

Smith was Portland manager for Equitable Life Co. and many of his friends came down river to spend the day.

The mill machinery was turned on in the afternoon and Fred Johnson auctioned off the first sack of flour produced in Astoria. The buyer was W. E. Schimpff, owner

of the North Pacific brewery, who bid \$75.

On May 12, the Port of Astoria released a financial report covering the period between May 2, 1911, and March 1, 1914. It showed receipts of \$417,072.63 of which \$10,294.85 came from County Treasurer W. A. Sherman and \$386,777.78 from the sale of bonds. Funds on hand amounted to \$417,017.63.

With election time approaching, two new candidates filed for positions on the port commission. They were George W. Warren of Warrenton and Harry Hoefley, , whose Centennial chocolates had become world famous three years before. The manager of the Weinhard-Astoria hotel, F. N. Whitman, filed a day later.

Eleven bids were opened at the port commission meeting of May 19 in Sanborn's warehouse. The prize was the contract for construction of Pier 1 which Engineer Walsh estimated would cost \$143,875.

The award went to the J. A. McEachern Co. of Seattle with a low bid of \$135,715.

Port commissioners had dreamed of a 35-foot channel into the port and on May 21 they delegated the task of dredging the channel to Tacoma Dredging Co. at a flat rate of 12 cents a yard. The firm had asked for 14 cents but this offer was turned down. To be moved was 1,250,000 yards of sand, clay and silt.

The commissioners voted to permit the Sanitary and Reclamation to build a bulkhead along the waterfront between Ninth and 23d streets and on May 22 contract for this work was awarded to Willapa Construction Co. Their low bid was \$44,535. The waterfront was divided into two districts and the work of filling behind the bulkhead went to Standard American Dredging Co. The firm offered to pump sand into the area between Ninth and 17th streets for 15 cents a yard. The remainder, between 17th and 23d streets, would be filled for 12 and a half cents a yard. This second fill would include Scow bay which the Astoria Baseball Association was eying as a playing field.

The crew clearing land at Flavel said on May 25

that the area would be ready for construction of James Hill's terminal docks by the end of November. Hill gave the contract on May. 27 to the firm of Guthrie and McDougall. L.C. Gilman, president of the Spokane, Portland & Seattle railroad, signed for the Hill interests to pay the contractors \$190,000.

Mayor E. E. Gray of Astoria declared that June 3 would be a holiday to celebrate four important events in connection with the dedication of the Port of Astoria.

The first half of 1914 had been a period of vast progress for the small fishing village at the mouth of the river. A huge new terminal was in the making within the port district, a flour mill had come finally to Astoria, and the people could look forward at last to treading on solid ground instead on the loose street planking.

Highest on the achievement list was the fact that the city soon would have a public port capable of receiving the largest ships then in world commerce.

Everywhere the chant was heard: "Nothing less than 40 feet.!!.

But the Astorians had not reckoned on the power of the river to sweep rich soil down from its upper reaches or the miles of red tape to be unwound before the Port of Astoria would have a deep channel to the sea.

Chapter Four

EXCAVATION

A railroad belt line to link the port with Tongue Point was discussed by the commissioners at the meeting of June 16, 1914, but the hesitant body took no action.

By June 20, the railroad trestle into the port area had progressed to such an extent that there was talk of laying rails on the following week. This short spur would permit heavy timbers to be brought in for use in construction of the pier superstructures.

But the chief concern of the port commissioners was the coming hearing before the Interstate Commerce Commission on rate parity, scheduled to begin on the 29th in Portland.

Another major problem became increasingly bothersome, the river itself and the "shoal" across its mouth. Lest the commissioners forget, E. M. Cherry warned them repeatedly that "the bar is still there." Cherry was agent for Lloyd's and British consul in Astoria and could cite losses which had resulted from the inability of vessels to cross in on schedule.

In preparation for the expected boom at Flavel, Capt. C. T. Belcher leased the Flavel hotel for a five year period and began serving his famous chicken dinners every evening.

The dredge Chinook arrived down river from the St. Johns repair yard under Capt. Jack Moreno and awaited assignment to a dredging area, either on the bar or on the Tongue Point channel. Members of her 68-man crew took advantage of the layup to enjoy the pleasures of Astor street.

The June 25 edition of The Oregonian remarked editorially that if Astoria was granted terminal rates, shipowners would prefer to pick up cargo at the Port of Astoria. The tenor of the editorial was petulant hostility. Examiner A. D. Pugh was named by the ICC as rate hearing officer.

The 19th Astoria Regatta opened on July 2 under the rule of Queen Allie Forstrom.

Engineer Walsh accompanied G. C. Fulton to the Portland hearing and testified before Examiner Pugh that the cost of operating a train along the water level route between Pasco and Astoria was approximately \$735. He said the run over the Cascades between Pasco and Seattle cost the railroad \$2000 plus.

The Astorians, pleased with the success of the Regatta celebration, incorporated the Regatta Association on July 3.

At the July 7th meeting, the port commissioners talked over plans to open the river as far upstream as Pasco and came up with a rare idea.

Why not build a fleet of 500-ton flat bottomed river boats and establish a shipping line to bring wheat from Pasco to Astoria? After doing some quick research, Attorney Fulton found a paragraph in the port charter which forbade the port's operation of a shipping line in competition with private lines. The commissioners decided to try to amend the charter.

Commenting on the Portland rate hearing, the editor of the Daily Budget said on July 8: "The Puget Sound people are fair and honorable, (They had not opposed rate parity for Astoria) not so the rulers of Portland. Even The Oregonian, Bible of Multnomah county, has lowered itself into the mire."

The Oregonian had expressed increasing opposition to any change in Astoria's railroad rates, possibly pressured the Portland merchants.

Two shifts were driving piling at the Smith cove site, working from 4 A. M. to 8 P.M. One of the piling inspectors was Ed Drew, the man who had been chief inspector of the Youngs bay railroad bridge project 22 years before.

The port commissioners voted to lay the belt line proposal and the shipping line project before the people but no date was set immediately for a special election. The Sanitary and Reclamation commissioners were upset because the dredge promised by Standard Dredging Co. had not yet arrived.

On July 18, the Bank of Flavel was incorporated by

Charles and Mary Hemphill and M. C. McCollock.

Port of Portland officials were behind a move to transfer Washington river ports from the Seattle to the Portland district, a move opposed by the Astorians. They were proud of their own customs office.

With the Columbia bar depth reportedly at 37 feet, the Army Engineers announced on Aug. 7 that they would have to lay up the Clatsop since the entire appropriation for bar improvement had been exhausted.

The turbanned Hindus who had been a fixture on Astoria streets for 15 years suddenly began chartering ships in Seattle and San Francisco. Those not already under orders of deportation joined the rush to India where a civil war was just getting under way.

It was decided at the port meeting of Aug. 12 to add a second story to the Pier 1 warehouse and commissioners offered to pay one twentieth of the cost of keeping the Chinook on the bar. The Port of Portland refused to participate although that body had assumed control of pilots and towing at the river entrance.

The war in Europe came a little closer when pilots reported a mystery cruiser standing off the bar, possibly in wait for enemy ships. The cruiser never was identified.

With the opening of the Panama canal on the 15th, the commission voted to erect a 90 x 1060 foot warehouse on Pier 1. It would be divided into six compartments, with fireproof doors isolating each.

On Sept. 1, the day that Dr. Betheria Owens-Adair's house burned to the ground across Youngs bay, commissioners huddled around a table in Sanborn's warehouse and opened the bids for construction of the Pier 1 superstructure.

The bids for labor and material were as follows:

Guthrie & McDougall & Co. \$166,050.

A. C. U. Barry \$150,380.

C. L. Houston \$145,425.

Robert Wakefield \$145,325.

Boyajohn-Arnold Co. \$142,535.

J. A. McEachern & Co. \$150,036.

On the following day, after Engineer Walsh had tailored the plans to fit, the contract was awarded to C. L. Houston of Astoria for \$128,352. Estimated time for completion of the project was 165 days. Approximately 4500 piles had been brought down from Oak Point and were standing in the water.

The Reclamation Commission voted on Sept. 3 to extend the waterfront bulkhead to 33d St., creating Sanitary District No. 3. Chief objectors were the owners of Clatsop sawmill.

Firing at sea was heard on Sept. 4 as far east as Jewell and Astorians suspected that the mystery cruiser had attacked an enemy ship.

At the Sept. 5 port meeting, it was decided that the port's main slip was to taper from 400 feet at the north end to 250 feet in width at the shoreline. Pier 3 was to have a projected width of 325 feet with additional room on both sides for railroad spurs. Slips were to be 30 feet deep at low tide and coal bunkers large enough to hold 20,000 tons were to built on the north end of Pier 2.

The tug Goliah arrived from Tacoma on Sept. 7 towing a barge loaded with dredge pipe and on the same day Gabriel Wingate presented the port with a series of charts of the estuary including one drawn in 1792.

Commissioner Wingate was a Glasgow-born Scotsman and had traveled widely before settling in Astoria in 1884. He had studied both mining and civil engineering at the University of Glasgow.

Attracted to the United States by the prospect of additional gold finds in California, he had prospected in Nevada and California for the major railroads. Prior to his arrival in Astoria, he had served as superintendent of coal mines at Coos Bay and on Vancouver island.

Wingate owned a ranch in the Lewis and Clark district, operated a real estate agency, and spent his spare time in promoting his adopted city.

Word came from the North that the schooner King and Winge, later to become a Columbia bar pilot boat, was laying off Wrangell island before making an attempt to rescue Stefanson's stranded party of explorers.

Tacoma Dredging company's big electric dredge arrived at the port site on Sept. 9 and her crew opened negotiations with the Hammond mill to supply electricity for the dredging project.

Some 8100 sacks of wheat destined for the Astoria flour mill were lost on Sept. 10 when the steamer Gamecock struck a rock near Hood River and went to the bottom.

On Sept. 12, E. E. Mattson, field superintendent for Standard Dredging Co., promised the Reclamation Commission that his firm would start filling behind the bulkhead any day. His announcement was premature. More than 300 men were at work on the two-mile Flavel waterfront and the S. P. & S. crew reported four miles of track already in place in the new railroad yard. Electricity for the dredge at Smith cove was turned on for the first time Sept. 14 and on the 18th the Wheat Growers Association of Eastern Washington telegraphed an endorsement of the port's plan to establish a shipping line.

Pier 2 bulkhead was completed Sept. 23 and at a meeting that evening the commissioners were notified that the final hearing on rates was scheduled for Oct. 16 in Washington, D. C. G. C. Fulton would represent the Port of Astoria.

Citizens across Youngs bay tired of being called "West Siders" and began a contest to select a new name. The Daily Astorian suggested "New Astoria" but the suggestion was ignored. Free industrial sites were offered by the railroad to any business firm which would settle at Flavel.

L. C. Gilman and others called at the Clatsop county court house on Oct. 2 and filed incorporation papers for a new firm, the Great Northern Pacific Shipping Co. This was the firm which would operate the liners Great Northern and Northern Pacific.

Astoria's Eleventh St., between the waterfront and Exchange, became known as the "Great White Way" when city workmen installed five street lamps on each of the four blocks.

Bad news came for the Astorians on Oct. 8 when officials of Standard Dredging Co. told city council members that their firm was broke and would be unable to complete its contract. On the same day, congress appropriated \$1,000,000 for improvement of the Columbia bar.

The Standard firm was well intentioned but its dredges and most of its heavy equipment was sealed off south of the border between opposing Mexican forces.

Coast Guardsmen completed a shaky wooden walkway on Oct. 9 between the Hammond mill and the Tongue Point buoy repair base, a distance of 1000 yards. Thereafter, off duty crewmen found it much easier to reach one of the eight saloons which clustered around the Scow bay depot.

Engineer Walsh suggested that a subway be built under the downtown streets before filling began to house electric and gas lines. In modified form, this idea eventually was adopted. Port commissioners voted Oct. 13 to oppose a measure which was to appear on the November ballot and which would give the state control of all tidelands.

Word came on the 17th that the liner Northwestern Pacific had been launched at the Cramp shipyard and was soon to begin trial runs.

The dredge Chinook ended 35 days of pumping on the bar and reported that the channel was now 30 feet deep and 300 feet wide. Drinking water was being taken to Flavel in tank cars while drill rigs bored to a depth of 440 feet in search of potable water.

R. R. Bartlett was named assistant port engineer on Oct. 24 and arrived from Seattle with the news that the northern city's port was \$6,000,000 in debt due to a crash expansion program. Railroad interest were behind a bill introduced in congress which would tax boatmen heavily to pay for upkeep of the waterways.

The Reclamation Commission, still hopeful that Standard Dredging would live up to its contract, again extended the time of completion for the downtown fill.

Frank Patton, George Sanborn and George Warren, president

of Astoria National Bank, were elected to the Port of Astoria commission at the election of Nov. 5. At the same election, voters approved a measure which annexed the communities of Flavel and ~~Warrenton~~ Skipanon to Warrenton. Clatsop county was the only one in the state which voted, by a 54 vote margin, against sale or possession of alcoholic beverages. The national prohibition act was scheduled to go into effect on Jan. 1, 1916. Schimpff announced he would close his Northwest Brewery immediately.

Standard Dredging Co. sent representatives to the Port of Portland commissioners asking that the dredge Columbia be placed on the bulkhead project to fulfill the tide flats contract. The Portland men were reluctant since they were unsure of the dredge firm's financial standing.

Port of Astoria commissioners voted at the Nov. 24 meeting to impose a 5-mill tax on citizens of the port district in the hope of raising \$100,000. This money would be used to complete the pier superstructures and would avoid issuance of additional bonds.

The completed steamer Great Northern, engaged in sea trials outside Philadelphia harbor, ran afoul of a hidden reef and was pulled free at high tide by six tugs. She was scheduled to inaugurate the Flavel to San Francisco run in January.

At the urging of the Reclamation Commission, the port commissioners voted to loan Tacoma Dredging's electric dredge to begin the tide flat fill. They believed that the port channel had been deepened sufficiently so that completion could well be left until spring. Officers of the Tacoma company offered evidence that the firm was not completely bankrupt and another extension was granted.

Seaside officials asked the Port of Astoria to aid in opening the canal between that city and the Skipanon river. The Seaside people saw in the canal a cheap means of transportation to the port of their clams and cranberries.

Workmen at Flavel began construction of a second

pier at the Hill terminal, this one to be exclusively for freight.

Fred Johnson was elected mayor of Astoria on the campaign promise that he would rid the city of rats and the city council named E. M. Houghton, a police captain, as chief of police.

Port of Portland commissioners announced on Dec. 11 that they would spend \$113,400 on bar pilots and pilotage in 1915. The pilot boat Joseph Pulitzer was ordered back on the bar after lying for three years on the mud flats at St. Johns. Two of the commissioners contacted the bar pilots and asked them to consider taking over the bar. The Portland port officials were finding that pilotage at the mouth of the river was expensive as the Union Pacific railroad had discovered before them.

The first port meeting of 1915, held on Jan. 5, was marked by the retirement of C. H. Callender from the commission and the seating of George Wafren, the newly elected member. George B. McLeod was chosen president for the coming year.

When the port auditor objected to a \$25 item among the vouchers which called for purchase of flowers for Commissioner Lester's funeral, the surviving commissioners dug up \$5 apiece to pay the bill.

On the day following the meeting the port engineer, F. J. Walsh, was elected president of the Astoria Boosters club.

What with all of the new organizations, The Boosters club, the new port commission, the Sanitary and Reclamation commission, the flour mill committee, the Ports of Columbia Association and the committee to fight rats, the Astorians apparently were in for a busy winter.

By force of circumstance, each group numbered the same individuals on its membership roll.

Chapter Five

COMPLETION

The lumber baron who had become known as the father of the timber industry in the northwest, Capt. Asa Simpson, died Jan. 12, 1915, in San Francisco at the age of 90. He had been ailing for some time with lung congestion.

Capt. Simpson liked to recall his early days in Astoria when he established the city's first sawmill in the timber at what is now Ninth and Duane streets. He relished tales of the ships he had built at Coos Bay to carry lumber from his sawmill at Knappton to all parts of the world. This sea commerce had contributed greatly to the prosperity of the lower Columbia river.

On the 15th, the Portland port commissioners voted to turn pilotage at the mouth of the river back to the licensed pilots. Members of the Portland body had been under constant fire from shippers for the poor service they provided on the bar.

Ten days later, the pilot schooner Joseph Pulitzer was brought down from Portland under command of Capt. Charles Gunderson and went seeking on the bar.

"The Port of Portland has provided the poorest pilot service we have ever seen," remarked the Evening Budget in an editorial. "They have made the Columbia river the laughing stock of the shipping world."

Astoria Chamber of Commerce and the Ports of Columbia Association voted on Jan. 27 to combine efforts in boosting improvement of the Columbia river bar. After paying attorney fees and expenses for the ICC rate hearings in Washington, D. C., the newly combined services found that their total resources amounted to \$1.26.

From Philadelphia came word that the steamer Great Northern had sailed for Flavel by way of the Panama canal. Aboard were two Astorians, F. D. Parker and William Madison, and W. D. Marshall of Warrenton. The vessel was scheduled

to arrive on Mar. 15.

The state land board issued a permit on Jan. 30 which would allow Astorians to dredge material from the bottom of the Columbia for the downtown fill.

Pressured by lumber shippers, principally Astoria Box Co., the commissioners announced on Feb. 23 that construction was far enough along at Pier 1 to permit handling of outgoing lumber cargo.

Members of the legislature voted to permit the Port of Astoria to develop a barge line on the river and word came from San Diego that the Japanese cruiser Asama had been wrecked on the coast of Baja California. Shipping men speculated that the Asama was the mystery cruiser which had been sighted earlier off the Columbia bar.

After 24 years of waiting, the Port of Portland dredge Columbia began pumping sand into the mud flats behind Astoria's new bulkhead. The Columbia was stationed on the north side of the ship channel and sand was forced through an under water pipe to the mud flats.

Members of the port commission attended a showing on Feb. 23 of the new motion picture "Birth of a Nation" and met afterward to plan a water excursion to the opening of the Celilo canal.

Marcus Talbot, president of the Port of Portland commission, died on Feb. 25 and was succeeded by E. W. Wright, former marine editor of The Oregonian.

S. P. & S. officials promised on Mar. 2 to pay for filling the mud flats underneath their right of way along port property and tendered a check for \$1741. This money went to Tacoma Dredging Co. The port commissioners voted to install endless cables at each ramp to aid in moving habd trucks. Chairman McLeod announced that the Clatsop county fair would be held on Pier 1.

The steamer Great Northern arrived at Flavel on Mar. 16, only two hours late from San Francisco. Two special trains brought 1500 guests from Portland including the Royal Rosarian band and the Portland Elks band. The crowd

on hand to greet the steamer was estimated at 8000.

C. P. Higgins served as general chairman of the event and Harry Hoefler, the candy man, took on the job of catering. He served 3000 cups of coffee during the day. Some 200 passengers from the Great Northern walked through the Port of Flavel waiting room and boarded a special train which was to take them directly to Chicago.

Highlight of the celebration was a mock wedding in which Miss Mable Ryder represented "Sail" in a minipageant coyly named "The Wedding of Rail and Sail."

The port commissioners returned to Astoria to find that Detroit Trust Co. had agreed to purchase \$150,000 of the port bonds at 99 and a half cents. The tax levy had not provided enough money to complete construction of the first two port units.

A dispute in the city council ended happily that night when the city road department agreed to turn the city car over to the fire department. The road department had spent \$27 in its operation during the previous month.

The Astoria Chamber of Commerce filed a protest Mar. 22 against granting bar pilotage rights to Puget Sound Tugboat Co. and in turn that firm refused to pay \$1500 a month to the Port of Portland for rental of the tugs Oneonat and Wallula. On Mar. 26, Portland port commissioners voted four to two against granting the pilotage to the Washington firm.

The steamer Great Northern sent word from San Francisco that she was laid up for engine repairs and would not be able to return to Flavel until the middle of April.

E. W. Wright, former marine editor of The Oregonian, was named manager of the Port of Portland on April 1, filling the vacancy left by the death of Marcus Talbot. The Chinook arrived down river that same day and began working on the Tongue Point channel. German U-boats were reported to be very active in the Atlantic and a number of ships crews refused to sail for east coast ports.

A survey on April 5 revealed that the bar was 23 feet deep and engineers reported that the north jetty now extended 7500 feet along the river entrance.

Joseph N. Teal, Portland attorney and son of the old

river boat captain, agreed to represent the Port of Astoria in ICC hearings in Washington, D. C. The port demanded recognition as a port of entry, a status which had been left out of the Commerce Commission's latest official list.

Port commissioners contracted on April 6 for \$30,000 insurance to cover the half completed dock facilities in case of fire. The port's land fill was sowed with oats to stabilize the sand and almost at once a crop sprouted.

Ownership of the steamers Great Northern and Northern Pacific became important when government officials ruled that railroad-owned vessels would not be premitted to use the Panama canal. This was on April 7, the day two boilers exploded at the Hammond sawmill halting production of electricity for the day.

Capt. George S. Lapraic reported from San Francisco that the Great Northern again was delayed by quarantine due to several cases of smallpox aboard. Newly elected Gov. James Withycombe declared the prison work release program a total failure after watching convicts at work at the Tongue Point quarry.

Standard Dredging Co. asked for a time extension on the city fill project and the census bureau reported on April 26 that Astoria had a population of 17,000.

The Celilo canal passed through its first vessels on April 28, 1915, opening the river 500 miles from its mouth.

On the following day, the tug Daring crossed in from Bremerton towing the gunboat Concord. The Concord, still dressed in gold and ~~white~~ white colors she wore around the world as a member of Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet, had come down in the world. She was towed across river to the quarantine station at Knappton where she ^{health} was turned over to the bureau of ~~health~~. Intended as a housing unit for ailing foreign sailors, she rusted there for years without being used.

Despite Gov. Withycombe's pronouncement, 13 more convicts arrived on May 4 to work at Tongue Point. The propellor Georgiana brought down a group from Portland to inspect the new port docks and that afternoon word came

that the liner Lusitania had been torpedoed off the Irish coast.

The Astoria-Spokane Terminal Co. announced on May 10 that it had purchased 2300 feet of frontage on the west side of the bay immediately north of the railroad bridge. The grain dealers and growers from east of the mountains who organized the firm planned to erect an elevator on the site.

This move frightened the port commissioners into action and the port engineer was instructed to draw plans for immediate construction of a grain elevator at the port docks. Walsh also was told to implement the tug and barge line to Pasco as soon as possible.

At the May 12 meeting, the commissioners authorized payment of \$3000 to McEachern on the pier foundation contract and another \$15,000 which had been held back until the work was completed. The docks were scheduled to be ready for any kind of traffic by July 1.

E. A. Gerdig, riprap contractor on the bulkhead project, reached 12th St. on May 21 and the governor appointed Edward Judd, Astoria; C. E. Wilson, Linnton, and Capt. J. Speier, Portland, to the state pilot commission. Terms had expired for John Kopp, Seaside, and S. M. Galleher, Astoria.

A decision of the Interstate Commerce Commission on May 28, later called the "Gateway Case," left Astoria at the mercy of the S. P. & S. railway in the matter of rates. With the coming of the Hill lines, longshoremen at Warrenton believed that enough traffic would be generated to warrant forming of a union at that port. The channel at the Flavel docks had been dredged to a depth of 27 feet.

Filling at the Port of Astoria site was completed on June 5 and Tacoma Dredging Co. moved its equipment upriver to Vancouver where the firm had a contract to work on the new Interstate bridge. In seven months, the Tacoma company had filled in 1,400,000 yards of river sand at Smith cove at a cost to the port of \$160,000. During this period, the Hammond mill charged \$30,000 for electricity to operate the electric dredge.

Growing losses to submarines off the east coast created a demand for bottoms and a great many hulks were dragged from the mud flats up and down the river and put back in commission. The first shipment of wheat from Flavel departed July 22 on the Great Northern and the Port of Astoria gained its first customer. Union Fishermens Co-op stored 100 tons of canned salmon at the port docks.

At the July 22 meeting, port commissioners authorized W. C. Laws & Co. to install water pipe at the port at a cost of \$1365.00.

Engineer Frank Walsh went upriver to look over the possibility of purchasing power barges and on Aug. 3 the commission met for the first time in its new quarters at the port docks. The first act was to authorize installation of electric lights in the new offices. At the next meeting, on Aug. 10, a sprinkler system was ordered for the entire port.

The first scheduled vessel to load at the Port of Astoria arrived Aug. 16 and was moored at Pier 2. She was the steamer Santa Cruz of the Grace Lines and awaiting her was a cargo of 500 tons of canned salmon destined for the east coast.

The channel across the bar was reported late in the month to be 1200 feet wide due to the work of the dredge Chinook under Capt. Jack Moreno.

The dredge Long Beach, owned by S. P. & S. railroad, began filling Sanitary district No. 2 on Sept. 3, the day Mrs. J. C. Roman was crowned Queen Tyyne the First of the 20th annual regatta. It was also the day of formal opening of the port docks. Percy Campbell's band played for the formal Admiral's ball on Pier 1 while police blocked off Eighth St. for a jitney dance. The Portland Telegram referred to the new facility as "the \$650,000 pier."

Frank Walsh returned from an inspection of power barges operating on the Mississippi river and told the port commissioners that similar vessels would work on the Columbia.

At the Sept. 7 meeting, port commissioners hired W. B. Curtis, a naval architect, to survey the river channel

above Vancouver and determine the needs of the port. The Port of Astoria was committed firmly to establishment of a barge line.

A week later, after consultation with Curtis, the board appropriated \$55,000 for construction of a grain elevator designed to hold between 80,000 and 90,000 bushels. The McEachern Co. was authorized to build a water tower of redwood to serve the new sprinkler system. McEachern was low bidder on the tower at \$1782.40.

The commissioners voted on Sept. 21 to set the 1916 port tax levy at two and a half mills but this was later upped to three and a half. They felt that their enterprise was now breaking even since the docks showed a net profit of \$927 for the month.

At the final September meeting, held on the 28th, a contract was awarded to H. E. Doering, Portland and Seattle contractor, for construction of the elevator foundation. His was the lowest of seven bids at \$22,658 for corrugated piling or \$22,878 for wooden piling. He was given 45 days to complete the job.

Five convicts arrived from Salem on Oct. 4 to replace five who had earned parole through work at the Tongue Point quarry. Port of Portland fired eight Chinese cooks who had been working on dredges since a new federal law did not permit Orientals to work on public projects.

On Oct. 8, 1915, Norblad and Hesse, the attorneys, filed a suit for a restraining order which would prevent the Port of Astoria from establishing the proposed barge line. They represented W. C. Brown of the Brown Diking Co. He questioned the right of the legislature to grant added powers to the port without vote of the people.

Warrenton officials appeared before the commission on Oct. 13 requesting aid in opening the Skipanon river channel which had become clogged with silt. Commissioners ordered Frank Walsh to make a survey of the river to determine if the port could help.

On the 19th, District Attorney C. W. Mullins asked

for dismissal of the suit against the port. The firm of Norblad and Hesse immediately filed notice of appeal. Late in October, the railroad began filling the area under its right of way through the city, an area of about seven acres.

On Nov. 3, the port commissioners voted to raise the pay of the harbormaster, Capt. Frank Sweet, to \$25 a month. He had been getting \$100 a year.

It had been almost a year since the port had filed its suit with the Interstate Commerce Commission but as yet no answer had been forthcoming.

The commissioners voted on Nov. 9 to call for bids for construction of a grain elevator and estimated the cost at \$25,000 with another \$15,000 to be reserved for machinery. The fledgling port had \$40,000 in the bank. The Hill railroads asked permission of the supreme court to file a brief opposing the port's proposed barge line.

Seven bids for construction of the elevator were opened on Nov. 23 but all were rejected as being too high. C. L. Houston did not submit a bid but offered to build the structure for cost plus 10 per cent. Three days later, his offer was accepted and he was given 75 days to complete the elevator and get it working condition.

On Dec. 1, the commissioners took an option on the sternwheeler Olympian, then running on Puget Sound. The Olympian was the famous Columbia river steamer Telephone, the fastest vessel in the world, launched in Portland in 1884. She had been destroyed by fire in 1887 off upper Astoria but was transferred to Puget Sound after being rebuilt and renamed. The option was surrendered a week later when marine engineers discovered her hull was in bad shape.

The port meeting of Dec. 7 almost ended in a riot when D. H. Welch protested that many of the expenditures by the commissioners were unjustified and the Portland Builders Exchange charged that the elevator bids had been rigged.

The last concrete pillar of the elevator foundation was poured on Dec. 14.

Commissioner George Warren remarked on Dec. 23 that

\$750,000 had been spent on construction of the port and it was time to begin producing an income on the investment. He appeared before the city council on the same day to object to the 10 cents a barrel the city was charging for water to mix concrete at the port.

The dredge North Bank, having completed work on the bulkhead, was declared a total loss on Dec. 28 after the tug Wallula pulled her towing bitts out by the roots off Grays Harbor. The dredge broke up on the beach but her crew of two escaped.

Many of Astoria's downtown buildings were gaping empty as the keepers of the city's 50 saloons began to close down in anticipation of the coming of prohibition, scheduled for midnight Dec. 31.

The year 1915 had been one of vast progress for the Port of Astoria. The year ahead was to see growing opposition from the Port of Portland, arguments with the contractor on the elevator project, and a threat to withdraw all support of improvements to the Columbia river bar.

Chapter Six

FRUSTRATION

Continued delay on the part of the Interstate Commerce Commission in issuing a decision in the matter of equal freight rates for Astoria began to irk the port officials.

On Jan. 4, 1916, Commissioner Gabriel Wingate proposed a drastic measure designed to stir the federal commission into taking positive action. He proposed that the Port of Astoria withdraw its support of improvement of the Columbia bar which, of course, meant ending of financial support for the dredging of a channel across the entrance shoal.

The suit had been before the commission for more than a year and despite evidence presenting an overwhelming case in Astoria's favor no decision had been forthcoming.

Wingate also proposed to go ahead with establishment of a barge line although a restraining order was still being considered by the state supreme court. He was in favor of submitting the question to a vote of the people.

At the meeting of Jan. 11, H. E. Doering, contractor on the elevator foundation, submitted a bill for \$5900.28 and promptly ran into trouble. Commissioner Patton pointed out that the contractor was 40 days behind his completion date and that the contract called for a \$50 penalty for each of these. He proposed to cut the payment to \$3900.28 and the matter was finally turned over to the attorneys to work out a settlement.

While the commissioners were still in session, G. C. Fulton telegraphed from Salem that the Oregon supreme court had decided in favor of the Astorians. The Port of Astoria was now free to operate a publicly owned barge line.

Displeased because the elevator contract had gone to an Astoria man, representatives of the Portland Builders Exchange charged that the bids had been rigged. One of the spokesmen said specifications for cribbing around the elevator foundation had been juggled to give C. L. Houston the contract after the other six bids had been opened.

The commissioners rejected the protest as one more effort to delay construction. L. C. Houston and his crew began work on the elevator structure after several consultations with J. G. Walters, foreman of the docks.

A raging storm which had begun during the first week of January reached a climax on Jan. 22 when an 80-mile wind swept across the estuary. Huge cakes of ice floated down river and were swept against piling along the waterfront, snapping them off like small twigs. The port's piling remained undamaged.

A committee named by the Astoria Chamber of Commerce started a fund drive on Jan. 28 to purchase all land in the Tongue Point area not already under public ownership. This group, christened the Naval Base Committee, planned to turn their purchases over to the navy as a site for a navy base. Such a base had been a dream of Astorians ever since Col. John Adair, first collector of customs on the Pacific Coast, had erected a rude fortification on the summit of the point.

On Feb. 7, ports along the north bank of the river were transferred in the Oregon customs district and at a meeting on the following day the commissioners made plans to handle coal commercially at the new port. They had a theory that ship traffic would tend to increase in an area where fuel was available for the steamships.

The dredge Chinook was pulled off the bar on Feb. 12 to go into drydock and on the 16th congress voted to cut in half the \$2,400,000 it had appropriated for improvement of west coast harbors. Operating expenses of the Chinook had been coming from grants contained in the biannual rivers and harbors bills.

Edgar Smith announced on Jan. 13 that his flour mill would double its output to 500 barrels of flour a day. The product was being well received both in California and in the east.

At the Mar. 14 meeting, the commissioners tabled a motion which called for hiring of a rate expert for the port. Although they did nothing about it, members of the board discussed the coming of diesel engines which were

then being installed in the newer vessels. There was an increasing shortage of seamen who were willing to venture into the war zone and a number of ships held over at the port for lack of crews.

Filling of the first two Sanitary and Reclamation districts was completed May 10 as far east as 17th St. and a week later Pacific Power & Light Co. surrendered its franchise to construct a street car line into Uppertown.

Mexican rebels were making sporadic raids across the border into Texas and on June 18 the Oregon National Guard was called into federal service, creating further shortages in men to man the ships.

The commissioners continued to discuss the starting of a river barge line through June and July but took no action. Late in August, the steamer Great Northern was pulled off the San Francisco run and placed on the route between the coast and Hawaii. There had not been enough business to keep two liners busy between the Columbia and California ports.

Only two firms submitted bids at the Aug. 29 meeting of port commissioners for supplying a mobile crane which would handle coal and lumber at the port. On Sept. 12, the contract was awarded to a Portland firm, Zimmerman, Wells, Brown & Co., which agreed to erect a 25-ton crane at the port at a cost of \$17,847. It was to be capable of handling either coal or lumber and the price would include \$1450 for extra trucks and \$450 for installation. Delivery was to be in 90 days. This is the same crane which Port Manager George Grove was to describe in 1973 as "an eyesore and a safety hazard."

On Aug. 29, City Attorney Albin Norblad proposed to the port commissioners that a capacious public bath house be erected at the port as one a chain along the waterfront. Norblad said these baths would be for the convenience of visiting sailors as well as the general public. Members of the commission were less than enthusiastic over the project.

The 21st annual Regatta opened on Aug. 31 with Muriel Saling as queen. Queen Muriel also presided over the Portland

Rose Festival and the Pendleton Roundup for 1916.

Houston completed the port's grain elevator in time for the conveyors to be given a test run as a Regatta attraction. On the night of the 31st, the railroad people operated a jitney service between downtown Astoria and the port at 25 cents a round trip. Hundreds of visitors attended the Queen-Admiral ball being held on Pier 1. On the way down from Portland, the sidewheeler T. J. Potter, serving as the queen's barge, collided with a pile driver in dense fog and smashed her pilot house. There were no injuries.

Entertainment for Regatta visitors included a night marine parade along the waterfront and a reenactment of the "Battle of San Juan Hill!" The promoter of this event guaranteed that 8000 shots would be fired from actual cannon. No one bothered to count the shots.

The eight hour day law went into effect on Sept. 1, averting a national railroad strike.

The long awaited decision of the Interstate Commerce Commission was handed down on Sept. 15. In it Astoria was granted equal freight rates with Tacoma and Seattle, a goal which the Astorians had been trying to reach since 1898 when the first train left Scow bay. Only Oregon, Washington Railroad & Navigation Co., among the railroads did not agree with the ruling. This had little effect on the port since that line's trains did not reach Astoria.

On that same day, the Chamber of Commerce committee of 21 met at the Weinhard-Astoria hotel to discuss the city's transportation problems. F. W. Swanton, new manager of Astoria Flouring Mills, said: We must have a local barge line to bring the grain down river to Astoria direct." He said moving grain by water would be 60 per cent cheaper than transporting it by rail. Swanton also brought up the fact that Astoria was the largest city in the state without a public market.

The Clatsop county fair opened Sept. 18, this time in Dreamland skating rink at the foot of 14th St. The port commissioners had decided against granting the use of Pier 1 for a second time. Contractor Gerding completed an

automobile road up Coxcomb hill as far as the new high school and pronounced the view from there as excellent.

Capt. Robert Jones sailed his gas launch Tramp out beyond the lightship and set up a marine saloon for the convenience of passing fishermen. His supply of beer was exhausted in three days but 80 cases of liquor aboard lasted a little longer.

At the port meeting of Sept. 19, Commissioner Wingate brought up the question of overcharges for delivery of cement to Astoria. California shippers were in the habit of consigning to Portland all cement destined for Astoria. A charge of 30 cents a barrel was then imposed for bringing the cement back down river.

San Juan Packing Co. of Seattle charged that the Columbia river packer's trust had coerced the Astoria port commissioners into denying the firm use of Pier 1. Commissioner George Sanborn, a packer himself, denied that a trust existed. He told his fellow commissioners that the various Astoria packers could never agree on anything long enough to form a trust.

The San Juan Co. had been using Pier 1 as a fish buying station and had been icing carloads of fish inside the warehouse. Commissioners Wingate, Warren and Patton were named as a committee to investigate the San Juan charges and to set fees for use of the port's space.

Edgar Smith announced on Sept. 21 that his flour mill would boost its daily production of flour to 1200 barrels a day after receiving orders from New York and New Jersey for immediate shipment of six carloads. Freight traffic was growing rapidly in the Astoria area. The Great Northern sailed from Flavel for San Francisco with 1800 tons of freight aboard, leaving behind 68 tons on the dock. There had been no more room in the hold.

One of the upriver canneries dumped 50 tons of surplus salmon into the river and the fish spread along the new bulkhead, creating a vile stench in the downtown area.

W. A. Hascom, an engineer hired by the port, made

a survey of the ship channel between Tongue Point and the port docks and reported an average depth of 45 feet. The channel was 250 feet wide in front of the city between the pierhead line and the middle sands.

Dan Hannula in his launch Union joined the Tramp off the bar with a fresh load of whiskey and beer. Federal authorities in Astoria agreed that the incipient "rum row" was illegal but decided to take no action. Hannula came back in on Oct. 5, having sold his entire stock of 800 bottles.

Capt. S. R. Winram brought the cutter Manning into the river for the winter after spending five months on the seal patrol in Alaskan waters. The crew almost rioted when they found that their pay had not arrived.

Shipyards along Youngs bay were thriving with 400 men employed at the McEachern yard and the smaller yards were begging for men. Well supplied with money, the Astoria unions demanded the closed shop along the waterfront. The Marconi company, which had erected towers in the Youngs bay marshes, reported direct wireless contact with a station 15 miles from Tokyo and promised regular service within days.

Lumber dealers, too, were having rate troubles. Sawmill owners along the lower Columbia protested against the five per cent extra charged for their shipments east of Huntington. The Great Northern loaded 31 cars of apples, an entire trainload, for shipment to San Francisco. Astoria was booming.

On Oct. 17, the Chinook was pulled off the bar and went upriver to her anchorage at the Engineer's dock at Linnton. That evening, the port commissioners voted to bar fish dealers from the port docks and passed a resolution asking the Interstate Commerce Commission to force the railroad to build a 200-foot drawbridge across Youngs bay. S. P. & S. had planned only a 100-foot opening for ships.

A fee of \$500 was included in the month's bills of \$4327.60 to pay Carter Hall, a Fairfax, Va., attorney, for his services before the ICC during the Washington hearings.

The rate question was not yet settled. On Oct. 21, Oregon, Washington Railroad & Navigation Co., owned by

Union Pacific, filed a petition with the ICC asking for a modification of the hard won Astoria rates. The railroad attorneys claimed that their situation was different from other rail lines.

Capt. Harry Spear of Spokane arrived on Oct. 23 and told Chamber of Commerce officials he planned to build ships at a 20-acre site on the Skipanon river. He was president of the newly organized American Shipbuilding Co.

Engineer Frank Walsh and the port parted company when a Portland firm sued the port commissioners to collect on a contract for machinery ordered by the engineer. Walsh had ordered the engines for the proposed port-owned boats without specific authority of the commissioners. They had cancelled the contract with Kerr-Turbine Co. and spent two weeks in court as witnesses. The decision was postponed.

On Oct. 28, the McEachern-Standifer-Clarkson shipyard launched its first vessel, the "City of Astoria," to the music of Bill Haga's band. Speaker of the day was G. C. Fulton, the port's attorney.

At the Oct. 31 meeting, Commissioner Sanborn raised the question of purchase of a dredge for the port which he said could be used on outside contracts and eventually would pay for itself. The commissioners took no action on a purchase but did pass a resolution asking the Engineers to put the dredge Chinook back on the bar. Except for a few caretakers, the crew of the Chinook had been paid off and were scattered to all parts of the northwest, looking for other jobs. The commissioners discussed the poor condition of Astor street but again took no action.

On Nov. 10, a major share of the McEachern shipyard was sold to a Copenhagen firm, A. O. Anderson & Co.

Some good news finally came on Nov. 13 when the Interstate Commerce Commission rejected the O.W.R. & N. petition and reaffirmed Astoria's rate parity.

Predicting a great industrial future for the Warrenton area, Clifford Barlow, chairman of the Skipanon Dredging Commission, again asked the Port of Astoria for aid in deepening the Skipanon channel. The port had made two

surveys of the channel but the commissioners were hardly in a position to spend money on the dredging project. A group of Pendleton grain growers visited the port docks and pronounced the new elevator the finest they had seen.

Port of Portland was having its troubles with the dredge problem, too. Capt. Hugh Groves, dredge superintendent, had clashed several times over the extent of his authority to purchase small items without authority from the commissioners. On Nov. 16, the Portland commissioners abolished his job.

The coming year was to see many changes at Smith cove; the personnel of the commission was to be altered and after a brief two years of progress the port commissioners were to lose control of the Port of Astoria.

Only one ship reamined on the mud flats in the Oakland estuary and in the Atlantic submarine losses were growing daily.

War clouds were gathering over the entire country.

Chapter Seven

CONSTRUCTION

F. C. Harley, a flamboyant real estate promoter who had been elected mayor of Astoria at the November election, ushered in 1917 at the Port of Astoria with a grand ball on Pier 1.

Second only to Dr. Alfred Kinney in boosting progress at the river city, Harley invited everyone in town to come and most of them did. The Chamber of Commerce hired Bill Haga's band to play and members decorated the pier shed with trees from the Lewis and Clark valley.

At the first port meeting of the year, held on Jan. 2, Dr. Kinney and Byron F. Stone were seated as members of the commission, replacing Commissioners Wingate and McLeod whose terms had expired. Stone was elected president for the coming year.

Admiral J. M. Helm and a party of navy brass arrived on Jan. 5 to inspect the Astoria area as a possible site for a naval base, a base which the Astorians had been begging for over a period of years.

Harbormaster Sweet and Attorney G. C. Fulton were named to succeed themselves and Chairman Stone declared that acquisition of a dredge was to rate top priority for the newly organized commission. Port of Portland ^{COMMISSIONERS} were looking for a way to relieve themselves of the responsibility for pilotage at the river entrance and there were rumors that the Astoria commission might take over. The Portland men were afraid of the financial responsibility in the event that one of their pilots should be involved in a marine accident.

At the Jan. 16 meeting, the Astoria commissioners invited bids for construction of a dredge to work at the port and in the estuary. They had been under constant pressure from the Warrenton people who wanted the Skipanon river deepened to encourage industrial growth.

The United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany on Feb. 3 and that night a man, later declared to be insane, set fire to the Clatsop mill, burning it to the ground.

Bids for the dredge construction were opened on Feb. 6 but the award was postponed and Engineer Bartlett was told to draw up plans for grain storage bins capable of holding 500,000 bushels. Three days later, the dredge bids were rejected as being too high even though one firm sent a man from Baltimore to present its offer.

On Feb. 14, Admiral Helm's navy board recommended construction of a naval base and airport in the Astoria area. The navy men picked Tongue point as an ideal location but deemed the price of land acquisition too high and the project faltered. Oregon's congressional delegation introduced a bill which would appropriate \$3,000,000 for construction of the base.

Bids for both the dredge and the proposed barge line were thrown out at the Feb. 27 meeting. Counteracting a move by the Portland commission, Commissioner Patton proposed that a drive start to move the Portland customs office to Astoria. Commissioners voted to enter suit before the ICC to settle the rate differential of 30 cents a barrel on shipments of cement.

Attorney Fulton charged that the Portland people were "encroaching" on Port of Astoria's rights and described the upriver customs office as a palace while that of Astoria was a "disgrace."

The commissioners voted on March 3 to turn down the Warrenton delegation's request but two days later, at a special meeting, reversed themselves and authorized a grant of \$10,000 to deepen the Skipanon channel.

A committee working on development of the Columbia river highway adopted a new slogan: "Let's Get Oregon Out of the Mud."

The liners Great Northern and Northern Pacific were assigned to the naval reserve on March 18 and on the 26th the Third Oregon regiment was called up for federal duty.

The following day, the commissioners offered use of the port to the navy. On March 31, the navy announced plans to build a giant submarine base at Tongue point.

The United States declared war on Germany on April 6 and on April 10 navy and customs agents began searching incoming ships in search of arms.

The north jetty was almost completed on April 20 when work was halted for the duration of the war. In four years, the Army Engineers had dumped three million tons of rock into the project and the jetty now extended 12,300 feet into the sea. The two jetties had cost a total of \$15,328,000 since 1885.

All lighthouse tenders went under army control on Apr. 24 and Capt. Archie Cann took command of the dredge Chinook, still moored at Linnton.

Port commissioners called for bids on a complex of concrete grain storage bins on April 30, the same day the price of a shave in Astoria jumped from 15 to 25 cents. The horrors of war were coming nearer home.

The dredge Chinook went back to work on the bar on May 9 after a survey showed that five or six feet of silt had accumulated in the channel during the winter.

Bids for construction of the grain bins were opened on May 8 revealing that the McEachern Co. was willing to build two units for \$139,950 and Burrell Engineering Co. would do the same work for \$149,618. In both cases, the port would have to pay for the cement. The award went to the local contractor, C. L. Houston, whose bid of \$174,000 included the cost of materials.

That night at the city council meeting, Mayor Harley had Councilman William Kelly forcibly ejected by police following an argument over the 7th St. sewer. Three men followed Harley to the Imperial Grill after the meeting and a fist fight ensued. In municipal court the next morning, the three men were released and the mayor was fined \$40 for disorderly conduct. Mayor Harley believed in direct action.

On May 15, the Port of Astoria finally bought a dredge.

FOUND

Chairman Byron Stone, the bargain, a machine then dredging for gold on the Sacramento river. An agreement was signed with Pacific Dredging Co. to purchase the four year old dredge for \$35,000 and Capt. TenBrook went south to close the deal. Delivery was scheduled for September 15. During the same meeting, the commissioners discussed acquisition of a power plant to provide electricity for the port.

Houston started work on the grain bins on May 28 and that afternoon Hills' two liners were changed from reserve status to active duty with the army transport service. They were not to leave immediately.

The port began an aggressive campaign to attract trade with the placement of advertisements in all four Portland newspapers.

On June 12, Treasurer Patton was authorized to sell another \$500,000 in port bonds. The port was faced with a staggering sum in bills: \$279,000 for the grain bins, \$18,000 for the steam crane, and \$85,000 for the dredge which had been named Natomia. The bins were now scheduled to hold 1,000,000 bushels and, according to Houston's plans, each of the 64 bins would be 28 feet in diameter and 78 feet deep. A 36 inch conveyor belt was to handle bulk grain.

Rogers Shipyard Co. leased the west side of Pier 2 on June 14 and began preparations to build four wooden hulls. In a somewhat unusual deal, the port was to get \$500 for each ship launched at the pier. Max Houser, a grain millionaire and member of the Port of Portland commission, purchased the former McEachern Shipyard in mid June. Early in July, prohibition agents seized 80 cases of fine whiskey aboard the Northern Pacific at Flavel and arrested one of the stewards.

Two bids for the port's bonds were rejected on July 3 but on the 17th the commissioners accepted the bid of Morris Bros. of Portland at 960. The Morning Astorian charged that this was a give away and that the deal was crooked. Port commissioners promptly sued the paper and its publisher, J. S. Dellinger, for libel.

Astoria Fulp & Paper Co., under the presidency of C. F. Hendrickson, completed a building on 1250 feet of Youngs bay frontage. Ewart Electric Co. installed electric lines on Pier 2 to the coal bunkers at a cost of \$1019 and Parr McCormick Steamship Co. leased space on Pier 1 for storage of transient cargo.

The Oregon legislature slipped through a law which abolished the post of port treasurers and spread the port's funds among several banks. The port filed suit, this time to have the law declared invalid. One would believe that the commissioners had fallen in love with the idea of appearing before the public on the witness stand.

A hassle developed at the meeting of July 31 over the relative merits of old growth piling, as specified in the contract for the grain bin foundation, and second growth timbers. A request from Rodgers shipyard to extend the crane tracks on Pier 2 was approved and commissioners set fees for mooring small craft at the port docks. Boats were to pay \$1 for 30 days moorage and 25 cents for shorter periods.

Following a hearing in justice court, Judge Carney turned the port's libel suit over to the grand jury.

Arrival of the dredge Natoma was delayed while its contracts were completed on the Sacramento river and the commission received a bill for \$5000 for extension of the crane tracks.

The boilers at the new paper mill were fired for the first time on Aug. 21 and the commissioners raised the pay of Engineer Bartlett from \$225 to \$300 a month.

The port requested permission early in September to fill the mud flats between 9th St. and the port docks and of Sept. 14 ship carpenters walked off the job, closing all shipyards in the northwest. The government had just issued an order bringing the yards under Shipping Board control. The last of the convicts who had been working at Tongue point were taken to Salem on the same day.

Port commissioners telegraphed Herbert Hoover on Sept. 26 asking that the port be considered as a shipping point for grain destined for the allies. Hoover had just

been appointed federal food administrator. It took Max Houser, the northwest administrator, to put through the designation for Astoria. Almost immediately, all space at the port was filled with government grain.

Grain storage rates were set at 60 cents a ton for the first 30 days and 12 and a half cents per ton for each day thereafter. This was two and a half cents less than the Port of Portland rate.

The shipyard strike was settled Oct. 28 and building of wooden hulls was resumed in the Astoria yards.

A month later, the War Shipping Board took over all railroads and the commissioners offered use of the port docks to William G. McAdoo, new railroad administrator. The commission finally acted on the proposed belt line on Apr. 30 and authorized start of construction.

McAdoo arrived in Astoria in May and was taken at once to the summit of Smith's point where he could admire an overall view of the port. He promised that the Columbia river ports would get a "square deal" in wartime shipping contracts.

Housing became a scarce commodity during July and August when the Shipping Board advertised for 50 women to work in Astoria machine shops and called for 1000 men to become ship fitters.

Charles Wilson, a native of Canada and a former Astorian, died Aug. 27 at the age of 67. He had been president of the Bank of Linnton, partner in a lumber company and president of the state board of pilots. Employes of the Port of Astoria observed a day of mourning in his honor.

A delegation from the Port of Tacoma visited Astoria on Aug. 28, intending to pattern their own port after the Astoria facility.

The Railroad Administration promised in September to turn the Lewis and Clark railroad over to the port when it was completed. A contract was awarded to Miller & Bauer to drive a tunnel under the S. P. & S. tracks for the port's belt line. The firm bid cost plus \$1,878, taking the job away from Houston who offered the same deal at \$1800.

The first unit of the belt line project was estimated to cost \$17,000 and would include a second tunnel under the entrance to the McEachern shipyard. The Natoma was brought around to Youngs bay to fill the right of way.

Every receptacle at the port was filled with government wheat. Chairman Stone reported on Oct. 8 that 191 carloads of grain had been handled since the storage bins were put to use. On hand were 250 carloads of bulk wheat and in the Pier 1 warehouse were 256 carloads of sacked grain and 51 carloads of flour. As the port marked its first anniversary as a grain terminal, Stone estimated that there were 6,000,000 bushels at the port.

An influenza epidemic which had spread across the nation closed all public meetings on Oct. 11 and the following day ~~THE PORT~~ asked for a reduction in the 88-cent round trip fare to Seaside. Commissioners ordered closure of the Youngs bay railroad bridge during the morning rush hour to permit the railroad to bring workmen into town.

Army Engineers revealed on Nov. 4 that the dredge Chinook was needed at Charleston, S. C., arousing a storm of protests from Portland and Astoria shippers. Houston began construction of a 500 place mess hall on Pier 2 for the convenience of shipyard crews and longshoremen. Through the efforts of the Natoma, the port now had 305 acres of land, each foot of it devoted to war production activity.

On Nov. 7, ¹⁹¹⁸ United Press reported signing of an armistice with Germany but the document was not signed until four days later.

The port commissioners again took up the question of purchase of a power plant on Nov. 12 but again no action was taken. Commissioner Patton recommended hiring of an engineer to survey water resources of the county. That afternoon, the 30-day influenza quarantine was lifted.

Astoria's three large shipyards began laying off men as wartime pressures eased and on Nov. 27 the commissioners authorized expenditure of \$1,500,000 for construction of a floating drydock. This was sheer optimism in view of the port's net income for September of \$6464.12.

On Dec. 17, the \$250,000 bond issue went to the highest of seven bidders, P.W. Chapman Co. of Seattle at \$9917. Also authorized was the construction of a new administration building. Astoria Marine Iron Works, crowded at the port, purchased a new plant site on Youngs bay. Mayor Harley wrote a farewell letter to the city council from San Francisco. The mayor had spent most of 1917 relaxing in New York and Washington. Engineer R. R. Bartlett took over management of the port on Jan. 1. 1918

Hill's liner Northern Pacific grounded on Fire island with hundreds of wounded men from France aboard but no lives were lost. Astoria Flouring Mills increased its production to 1000 barrels a day.

The Natoma began working on the Skipanon channel and the port commission rescinded its decision to build a drydock. Nebraska ratified the national prohibition amendment, the last state necessary to make the act a law.

Wilson shipyard on Youngs bay was given a contract on Jan. 2, 1918, to construct a 64-foot dredge tender for the port. It would have a beam of 15 feet and would also be named Natoma.

Promised federal aid, the port commissioners voted to extend the belt line eastward toward the downtown area. The first unit was to be a new spur between the port docks and the railroad main line. The commissioners observed another day of mourning for Senator Charles Fulton following his death on Jan. 28.

The dredge Natoma finally arrived on Feb. 21 after bucking a gale which dismasted the schooner Gamble and kept that vessel outside the bar for 23 days. Towing the dredge was the steam schooner Johan Paulsen under command of Capt. Ivar Ulvestad.

The Paulsen had hardly fastened her lines when federal prohibition agents and Clatsop county deputies, armed with axes and crowbars, swarmed over her decks.

While others searched her hold, one crew of agents ripped open the cabin ceiling and seized 81 cases of fine whiskey they found hidden there. Capt. Ulvestad and 21 of his crewmen were hustled off to the county jail. In the

morning. Following the release of the captain and 17 crew members, the Paulsen was moved upriver to take on a cargo of lumber at Westport. There prohibition agents boarded her again and confiscated 75 additional cases of whiskey. Along the waterfront it was suspected that one of the crewmen was a stool pigeon. Closing of the saloons had created a liquor shortage in Oregon and the four men involved had expected to sell their hidden cargo for \$10 a half pint.

On Feb. 22, 1919, the Railroad Administration told port commissioners it would help finance a railroad up the Lewis and Clark valley. The port also was to aid in housing of the rapidly growing population.

Workmen removing a 20-foot section of pipe from the forward intake of the Natoma were acutely embarrassed on April 10, 1919, when a wall of water rushed in through the opening in the hull. Despite efforts of Capt. TenBrook and his crew, the Natoma went to the bottom, leaving only five feet of her pilot house showing. Luckily, the dredge was moored at the base of Pier 1 where the slip was only 25 feet deep.

The port commissioners called a special meeting to consider hiring a salvage firm to retrieve the dredge but decided the best available talent was on the port staff.

A proposal to lift the Natoma by use of barges and the tides was discarded during the coming week. On April 15, divers went down and began spotting sheet piling for a cofferdam. The sinking was unfortunate since the dredge had been promised for channel work at Tongue point.

Max Houser, the grain man and now a member of the Port of Portland commission, had provided part of the financing for the Lewis and Clark railway and on April 16 made an inspection of the project. He told a group of Astoria business men that completion of the line to Hillsboro depended on them. The rails left the Seaside line at Clatsop station and by now reached within 30 miles of the valley town.

Lt. Alfred Kinney of the Army Medical Corps got off the afternoon train that day in time to vote on

extending the port's belt line from 2nd St. to the east side of 10th St. in the downtown area. Dr. Kinney, still in army uniform, got the job of securing a right of way and supervising the fill.

The city of Seaside requested port officials to aid financially in the construction of an ocean pier at the west end of Broadway but action was postponed. At the Clatsop county court house, incorporation papers were filed for the Astoria Bank of Commerce. Business was booming around the Astoria peninsula despite the dropping off of wartime construction.

Thomas Bilyeu, manager of Astoria Marine Iron Works, said his firm would build a marine railway at the new site on Youngs bay. The Leadbetter brothers began construction of an addition to the paper mill and exhibited samples of the first newsprint turned out by the plant.

Along the north waterfront, Edgar Smith revealed plans to erect a second unit of his Astoria Flouring Mills, this one to be adjacent to the port's grain storage bins.

The future of the port looked bright.

Chapter Eight

OPERATION

Army and navy signalmen were still boasting over their feat in sending phonograph music by wireless on April 23, 1919, when word came from the east coast that the Chinook was dredging up cannon balls. The big dredge had left Astoria on Feb. 1 and was now working on a channel off Ft. Sumpter.

Port of Astoria officials protested that the grain bins were still filled to capacity while San Francisco contracts called for moving 10 carloads of wheat to Europe. Astorians blamed the War Shipping Board.

McEachern & Co. was awarded a contract on April 29 for construction of the warehouse extension on Pier 1 on a bid of \$44,170. The 90 by 340 foot building was to be of hollow tile. Contract for the belt line track on Astor St. between the port and 10th St. went to Miller & Bauer at \$14,197. Port commissioners agreed to help finance a new bridge across Youngs bay if the highway department would permit the port's belt line to occupy the center lane.

The battleship Oregon, famous participant in the Spanish-American war, arrived from Bremerton to take part in the Victory Loan drive and navy officials promised she would remain in the Columbia river.

The port's profit for the first three months of the year amounted to \$24,122.57 on income of \$29,434.81 from Pier 1 and \$15,179.20 from Pier 2. Edgar Smith said the flour mill had received orders from England for 79,000 barrels of flour.

Some Astorians suspected a deep, dark plot when the Port of Portland's tug Oneonta struck the railroad bridge draw span, shutting off traffic with Seaside for almost a week.

On May 6, a \$250,000 port bond issue was sold to Smith & Paschall of Seattle and the Seattle National Bank at 99.12.

Foundation for a flour mill at the port was completed that day and the commission voted to call for bids on Pier 3 construction. George Sanborn told fellow commissioners he had

purchased a strip of waterfront between 9th and 12th Sts. from the estate of Capt. George Flavel for \$150,000.

Martin & Wills Co. got the contract on May 13 to build a flour mill on port property and was given 100 days to complete the project. Their bid of \$75,470 was the lowest of eight submitted.

On May 15, the War Shipping Board informed port officials that the stored grain would soon begin to move and promised the first ship within a week.

The government dredge Clatsop, aided by two shore pumps, emptied the cofferdam around the Natoma on May 19 and quick repairs to the hull enabled the crew to float her that afternoon.

McEachern began the warehouse extension on Pier 1 on May 20 and the commission awarded a contract to West Coast Engineering Co. for wiring the new flour mill on a bid of \$1,325. By May 27, the port had shipped 1,000,000 bushels of wheat.

The port commissioners turned a cold shoulder on three firms which offered on June 4 to supply cement for construction of the flour mill.

"We're out to break the cement trust," said Chairman Stone. The cement dealers were still collecting 30 cents a barrel for bringing the cement down river from Portland.

Blake, McFall Paper Co., the firm financing Astoria Paper Mills, began construction on June 7 of a three story building to house machinery for production of fine paper. Until now, the mill had been turning out cardboard. Astoria Marine Iron Works drove the first piling for a marine railway just south of the railroad bridge across Youngs bay.

The Natoma's hull was reaired by June 10 and she began pumping sand for the highway fill between Youngs river and Miles Crossing. Clem Rodgers bought the Clatsop mill site and began reconstruction under the name of Oregon Pacific Lumber Co.

Construction started June 7 on the reclamation bulkhead between the sawmill site and the Astoria Box plant on 37th St. Port authorities decided not to permit any more ship

launchings at the port since bids would be invited on July 1 for construction of Pier 3. Port of Portland renewed the rate war that same day by asking ICC for a preferential break which would favor the upriver port over Astoria and Puget Sound shipping points.

The Portland port had been losing money steadily on operation of bar pilotage and decided to sell the schooner Joseph Pulitzer when projected repairs were estimated to cost \$7200. With the addition of a third mate and an additional deck hand, the tug Wallula was scheduled to take over pilot duties on the bar.

The largest single development at the port since its birth was assured early in July when a contract for building Pier 3 was awarded to a New York firm on a bid of \$815,491. Foundation Co., the lowest of five bidders, was to build the third pier to extend 1526 feet along Slip 2. The west side, along Slip 3, was to be 1760 feet long and the face would be 535 feet wide. Bartlett had estimated the cost at \$840,879.

In addition to the contract amount, the port was faced with other expenditures: Sprinkler system, \$25,000; cement, \$19,120; electrical work, \$7,000; railroad spur, \$14,227 and sand fill, \$100,000.

The cement bids finally were rejected on July 8 since the lowest was \$3.56 per barrel and the commodity was selling in Portland for \$3.15. It was estimated that 7,500 barrels would be needed for port construction.

The steamer West Islay arrived July 14 to pick up wheat and immediately ran into trouble. Longshoremen walked off the job with a wage demand of 80 cents an hour and \$1 an hour for trimmers working in the hold. Another strike, this one over poor food, held the government dredge Clatsop at Sanborn's dock and prevented her from working the bar. Astoria Electric Co. was authorized to wire the new administration building at a cost of \$750.

Pressured by the War Shipping Board, longshoremen began loading the West Islay under protest on July 16.

Faced with rising construction costs, the commissioners

voted on July 22 to sell \$450,000 in improvement bonds to Morris Bros. of Portland at 990.50.

The renewed battle over rates began before ICC officials in Fortland on July 27. First witness was John Lothrop, a member of the Port of Portland commission. He admitted on the stand that the action was not aimed at getting better rates ~~than~~ than those of Seattle but to gain a favorable rate over Astoria. The ICC hearing shifted to Seattle on July 29 where the Astoria case was presented. George McLeod, former Astoria port commissioner and manager of A. B. Hammond's affairs in Warrenton, told the ICC commissioners that Astoria's population was now 27,000.

Some Astorians were mildly excited when the Natoma's crew reported the dredge was sucking \$2.50 in gold with every yard of black sand it took from the bottom of Youngs bay.

Construction on the new marine railway was held up early in August by a dispute between carpenters and pile bucks as to which union should complete the job. At the port, longshoremen demanded \$1 ~~an~~ hour straight pay and \$1.20 to \$1.50 for overtime.

While the commissioners were wondering what to do with the Rodger shipyard on Pier 2, The Shipping Board ordered destruction of the two hulls remaining on the ways. The yard had turned out three completed ships but the two remaining hulls were only half done when work was suspended. The Shipping Board had second thoughts before the month was out decided to sell the hulls. Buyers were found almost at once.

An increasing demand for electric power caused Pacific Power & Light Co. to launch a search for a plant site and company officials found one on Youngs bay. There they bought 15 acres of frontage west of the Youngs bay bridge.

McEachern & Co. got the job of extending the port's belt line to the new paper mill on a bid of \$18,000. Part of the line would be built on a trestle over themud flats.

When workers on the flour mill project asked for \$8 a day, the commissioners voted to set up a wage schedule for all port construction. Chairman Stone warned that all

work would be halted at the port if the round of wage demands continued.

Budding industry in Astoria suffered a terrific blow on the night of Sept. 1, 1919, when the new paper mill caught fire and burned to the ground. Even the pier, stocked with paper ready for shipment, went up in flames. Owners estimated the loss at \$250,000.

The newly reorganized U.S. fleet appeared on the west coast and Astoria was promised a visit from several units. The battleship Vermont moored at Pier 1 on Sept. 6 while the armored cruiser North Carolina anchored off the waterfront to begin Astoria's first fleet week. The dock superintendent, George Walters, used steam from the port's crane to heat 3000 cups of coffee for the visiting sailors. Visitors to the ships wandered through a forest of young trees with which the Chamber of Commerce had decorated the two piers. The Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, climbed down from the bridge of the Vermont and went in search of a naval base site in company of a party of local officials.

First piling for the new power plant was driven on Sept. 10. and that afternoon state conciliators arrived to set up a wage schedule in the Astoria area. Harbormaster Frank Sweet was appointed member of the state pilot board and on Sept. 23 the Lower Columbia River Waterfront Employers Association was organized.

The Natoma was moved to Westport to gouge out a channel and turning basin and Astorians sent irate telegrams to the Army Engineers protesting that the dredge Chinook was idle in Charleston harbor and should be returned to the Columbia.

Shipyard workers went on strike on Oct. 2 idling 200 men in the Astoria area and some 200 deckhands tied up all tugs on the river in a bid for higher wages.

Contract for installation of a conveyor system between the new flour mill and the main terminal was awarded Oct. 7 to H. W. Sharp & Co. on a bid of \$3,406.26. Pacific Blowpipe Co. agreed to install a dust collecting system at the mill for \$920.

At the Oct. 14 meeting, the commissioners voted to

grant no leases at the port although an asphalt firm had made a very attractive offer for space. McCartney Electric Co. of Astoria got the contract for wiring Sections 1, 5 and 6 of the Pier 1 warehouse on a bid of \$3,344. There were three other bidders. The monthly report showed that 38 ships had called at the port during September, most of them to load wheat.

After looking over the bar and talking to bar pilots, the Army Engineers decreed that the Chinook would stay on the east coast for another year. A summary for the month showed that Pier 1 had taken in \$3,532.47 with expenses of \$6,286.32. Pier 2 showed a 6.5 per cent return on income of \$6,960.05. The port paid out \$2,300 for its share of Taylor Ave. improvement.

On Oct. 28, the commissioners voted to put all electric wiring underground and got an estimate of \$17,000 from the power company. The delegation from Seaside to ask the port to contribute \$75,000 toward construction of a steel pier. The commissioners said they couldn't afford it. Columbia River Ships Bunker Co., operating the bunker on Pier 2, said it needed more room for coal storage since an increasing number of ships refueled at the port.

A fireman from the Natoma died on the morning of Nov. 4 from burns received the night before when a tube exploded in the port boiler of the dredge. Gus Meadbrough, 50, native of Luxemberg, was burned over most of his body by hot water and steam. His wooden leg prevented him from making an escape.

On Nov. 5, Frank Sweet was named a sub agent for the Sea Service Bureau and the Natoma came back from Westport to pump sand away from the face of Pier 1. Pipe was laid around Pier 2 and the sand went into the Pier 3 fill.

The city of Warrenton voted to declare itself a port district and authorized issuance of \$250,000 in bonds to establish a port. Another issue of \$150,000 was approved for purchase of two tracts along the waterfront.

Port of Astoria records showed that exports for the first 10 months of 1915 had amounted to \$234,849. For the same period in 1919, the port handled outgoing cargo valued

at \$4,154,602. According to customs house figures, Astoria was the only west coast port to show an increase for the year. The special navy committee reported that Astoria was an ideal site for a submarine base.

On Nov. 18, the commissioners voted to use port employes in installation of underground wiring at a cost of \$7,654 thus saving \$1,818 in labor costs. On his return from a Seattle conference with navy officials, Byron Stone proposed that the port purchase Tongue point and donate it to the navy.

The customs office reported on Jan 2, 1920, that exports from Astoria during 1919 were valued at \$15,000,000. The Natoma returned to the Skipanon and began dredging a turning basin where the city was working on the newly authorized municipal docks.

On Jan. 5, the port commissioners requested the legislature for a bill which would raise the port's bond ceiling to provide funds for purchase of Tongue Point. The port already had issued bonds amounting to \$3,000,000 but wanted authority to bond the facility up to 15 per cent of assessed value. Plans were on the drawing board for construction of Piers 4, 5 and 6.

George Rodgers, the man who had built ships at Pier 2, received a contract from the Shipping Board to get rid of all wooden hulls still on the ways throughout the country at \$5000 a hull. There were 34 of these at various ports.

Fill from the Warrenton basin was being dumped in ponds surrounding the railroad depot where millions of frogs made the nights hideous.

Portland lobbies at the legislature began an active campaign on Jan. 16 to defeat Astoria's bond ~~exist~~ ceiling bill but called it off the following day. The Portland Chamber of Commerce also had a change of heart on the rate question and withdrew opposition to Astoria on Jan. 19. Members were afraid any new ICC regulation would backfire to their disadvantage.

Plans of the port to purchase Tongue point were spiked abruptly on Jan. 22 when Gov. Ben Olcott vetoed the bill calling for a raise in the bond ceiling. On the same day.

the General Services Administration decided against a new federal building for Astoria.

Port profits for December, 1919, amounted to \$1,441.73 and there were still 436,124 bushels of wheat stored in the warehouse on Pier 1.

Still anxious for a naval base at Tongue point, the port commissioners decided on Mar. 15, 1920, to put the question to a vote of the people. They had offers of a 215-acre tract and 215 acres of submerged land along Cathlamet bay on the east side of the point.

At the board meeting of April 13, Commissioner Patton again brought up the question of construction of a marine railway at the port but found little support among the others. Chairman Stone said the bill calling for purchase of the naval site would be on the November ballot. A delegation of Montana wheat growers appeared at the meeting with plans for a grain elevator which they proposed to build at the mouth of the Lewis and Clark river. They had already purchased the land.

Late in May, J. E. Gratke and W. P. Roberson flew in from Portland in a seaplane and urged the commissioners to build an airport in the Astoria area. The two men began regular seaplane service to Portland on June 16 with one plane making the 80-minute flight five times a week.

Summarizing a 10-year period, the weather bureau said that the Columbia bar had been fogbound an average of only 696 hours a year. This compared to 1306 hours for Puget Sound and 1571 hours for San Francisco. Port of Seattle had been citing the fog problem in propaganda against the Port of Astoria. Army Engineers declared that the Columbia bar was a thing of the past and that the channel was now 3,300 feet wide with a depth of 47 feet at high tide.

The Portland port commission called a meeting for July 10 to discuss railroad rates but the Astorians ignored it; they were satisfied with the rates as they were. At five cents a ton, Astoria's cargo handling fees were the lowest in the nation. Estimates presented at the port meeting of Aug. 20

revealed that the port docks and other improvements were now valued at \$3,000,000.

Bonding attorneys refused on Sept. 13 to handle a bond issue for the Port of Portland but approved a \$30,000 issue for the Port of Vancouver. On Oct. 12, Oregon Washington Railroad & Navigation Co. signed contracts for construction of an \$80,000 pier at the foot of 17th St.

A strike against the Foundation Co. on Aug. 14 halted construction at Pier 3 but work was resumed three days later. Warrenton people again requested help of the Natoma in dredging the Skipanon but were turned down when Capt. TenBrook said the port's dredge needed new boilers. The commissioners requested on Sept. 15 that property assessments within the port district be raised, a request which was granted on the 28th.

The question of extending the belt line to Tongue point came up again at the meeting of Nov. 13 since the prospects of a naval base there seemed bright.

The commissioners filed suit with the War Shipping board on Dec. 2 charging that the Matson line was ignoring Astoria and gained a favorable verdict two days later. Matson was ordered to make Astoria a port of call.

The 575-foot British steamer Orca, largest vessel to enter the river up to that time, tied up at Pier 1 on Dec. 10 to load grain for the United Kingdom. At that time she was third largest ship in the world and had a draft of 36 feet. Port of Portland claimed later that the Orca had proceeded upriver but Astorians pointed out with glee that the channel to Portland was barely 30 feet deep.

On Dec. 20, word came that the former Columbia river pilot boat Joseph Pulitzer had been lost in Alaskan waters while carrying mail between Seward and Onalaska. That afternoon, the commissioners named Roger Pinneo, freight traffic manager for Admiral line, to be general traffic manager at the Port of Astoria.

Pinneo was to have a vast influence in port affairs.

Chapter Nine CONFLAGRATION

Failure of Morris Bros., the Portland bond house, to open its doors on Dec. 27, 1920, had little effect on the Port of Astoria since all of the port bonds purchased by the firm had been delivered to investors. A warrant was issued for the arrest of John L. Ethridge, president of the firm, and the shortage in accounts was estimated to reach as high as \$1,000,000.

Emory Prouty, Seaside and Warrenton lumberman, was seated as a new member of the port commission at the first meeting of 1921, held on Jan. 4. He replaced Dr. Alfred Kinney who had been extremely active during his four years on the board but now, at the age of 71, was willing to retire.

At a banquet in his honor, Dr. Kinney was characterized as "father of the Port of Astoria" and was given an easy chair in which to enjoy his retirement.

A \$500,000 bond issue which the port had sold to P.W. Chapman & Co. of Chicago in December for \$485,000 was re-advertised. The bonding attorneys had not given approval of the bonds in time to complete the sale. On the second round, the bonds went to the sole bidder, Ralph Schneeloch & Co. of San Francisco.

On Jan. 7, the Flavel hotel was leased to G. M. Garing who planned to open it as a road house under ownership of a Portland syndicate. That same day, port officials were notified that the Royal Mail Line would make Astoria a port of call.

The Lighthouse Service authorized installation of wireless equipment on all lightships and at the port meeting of Jan. 11 Frank Sweet was reappointed harbormaster at a salary of \$50 a month.

Sale of the \$500,000 in bonds brought the port's bonded indebtedness indebtedness to \$3,625,000. Net profit for the first 10 months of 1920 had been \$21,000 and the cost of building Pier 3 was estimated at \$1,200,000.

Displeased with a proposal to widen Commercial street

to 80 feet, H.R. Hoefler, the Centennial candy man, threatened to close his Astoria plant and move to San Francisco.

The new port traffic manager, Roger Pinneo, arrived with his family from Seattle on Jan. 12 and three days later Attorney G. Clyde Fulton filed a protest with the Interstate Commerce Commission over a 10 per cent rate advantage which had been granted to Portland. The port commissioners authorized repayment to the banks of \$223,000 which they had borrowed to cover current bills.

Drillers working in the Lewis and Clark valley reported that their oil well had reached a depth of 425 feet into blue shale and from Seattle came word that the port there would join Astoria in the ICC protest.

While port officials were waiting for delivery of four electric cranes ordered for Pier 3, the steamer Pomona struck the face of the pier, inflicting \$2,125.44 damage. Referees in Portland said Morris Bros. would pay 85 cents on the dollar.

On Jan. 27, the fill gave way at Third and Front Sts., tilting the power company's gas tank and allowing the city's gas supply to escape. Service was restored in 24 hours from the new plant on Youngs bay.

Recording instruments were blown off North head on Jan. 31 after clocking the wind at 132 miles an hour.

The following day, the War Shipping Board offered to release one vessel to ferry Alaskan coal to the port. The commissioners had asked for allotment of two ships.

Meeting on the morning of Feb. 1, the commissioners approved sale of \$300,000 in 10-year, six per cent bonds to cover bills in the amount of \$318,903.21 soon to come due. The port officials heaved a collective sigh of relief when Chairman Stone mailed a deed to Tongue point to the United States district attorney in Portland. The naval base seemed a step nearer. Customs records revealed that 492 vessels had loaded at the port during 1920.

At the meeting of Feb. 8, Jack Smith of Crown Willamette Pulp & Paper Co. told commissioners his firm wanted to know exactly what they were doing with all that taxpayer

money. Crown was vitally interested since the firm owned vast timber acreage in the county and was taxed accordingly.

Stone was able to answer all of Smith's questions although to some of the spectators his answers sounded like a handout from the Chamber of Commerce.

Oregon Washington Railroad & Navigation Co. withdrew from the Columbia and Willamette rivers on Feb. 15 after 41 years of providing water transportation between Astoria and Portland. Harkins Transportation Co. took over the run.

Envious of the ease with which the Astorians were able to float bond issues, the Multnomah county delegation introduced a bill in the legislature on Feb. 15 which would require a vote of the people before any port could issue bonds. Portland, of course, was excepted. The same group introduced another bill which had the effect of holding up transfer of the Tongue point deed to the navy. Both died in committee.

On Feb. 23, the commissioners rejected a bid of 905.75 from the Schneeloch Co. for the \$300,000 bond issue and received another petition from Warrenton asking that the Natoma complete dredging of a turning basin.

Following the lead of other Pacific coast ports, the port wiped out handling charges early in March and signed an agreement with the Montana grain growers to ship their product through Astoria.

John Ethridge was indicted Mar. 16 on a charge of misappropriation of \$250,000 and Fred Morris, a partner in the bonding firm, was declared innocent and released.

Except for final work on the warehouse roof, Pier 3 was completed on March 24 and its builders pronounced it the second largest pier in the country. The warehouse was the largest owned by any port in the United States up to that time. Steel for the Pier 3 cranes arrived on Mar. 29 and in payment Stone sent a check for \$41,939 to McKyler Fabrication Co. of Cleveland.

Port of Portland commissioners uttered anguished moans when the annual report showed a loss of \$48,112.82 for 1920

on pilotage at the mouth of the river. The 1919 loss had been only \$32,703.06.

Roger Pinneo's efforts to stimulate traffic at the port began to show results on April 5 when two shipping lines, Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific Steamship, agreed to make Astoria a port of call.

The Portland Chamber of Commerce initiated a new attack on Astoria's port status on Apr. 8 in a further attempt to eliminate the stop at Astoria for Portland-bound vessels. Astoria commissioners were quick to point out that this would add a 100-mile opportunity for illegal entries and create a smuggler's paradise.

Astoria Marine Iron Works began manufacture of road grading machinery in an effort to replace the business lost when the emergency shipbuilding program ended. Both Astoria and Portland expressed interest when the War Shipping Board announced that several liners would be put on the auction block.

The deed to Tongue point was accepted formally by the Navy Department on April 22 in Washington and that morning 225 longshoremen walked off the job when the Employer's association attempted to eliminate travel pay for gangs coming into the area.

The Mitsubishi people sent a delegation from Japan to inspect the port on the following day and the ICC denied a rehearing on the Astoria and Puget Sound rates from the Snake river basin. The difference amounted to about 50 cents a ton but Chairman Stone told fellow commissioners Astoria was close enough to the sea to compensate. Notrogen Products Co. attempted to lease space at the port but was turned down.

Marine engineers tied up shipping on the east coast but the west coast locals delayed taking action.

Capt. Fritz Hirsch, a bar pilot, amazed the waterfront on May 5 by bringing the schooner Edward R. West in across the bar under full sail and warping her in to Pier 2. The bar tug Oneonta had been forced to wait outside for the passenger steamer Admiral Evans.

On the morning of May 11, the new sardine cannery east of Wilson's shipyard was reduced to ashes. Striking seamen rioted in Portland and fought a pitched battle with police. The Wilson yard launched the first crossriver ferry on May 18 and the port rejected a low offer for a new issue of \$100,000 in bonds.

Eagle boat No. 58 arrived at the port docks on May 26 and the following day her commanding officer, Cmdr. W. B. Allison held a ceremony on deck, taking over the old Lewis and Clark campsite on Tongue point as a naval base.

Bankers attending a state convention met on Pier 3 on May 31 for a salmon dinner and the following morning the port readvertised for bids on the \$100,000 in bonds. The flour mill at the port was grinding out 600 barrels of flour each day.

Lt. Cmdr. Gaylord Church arrived in Astoria on June 11 with a crew of navy engineers to plan the new Tongue point base. Manager Bartlett met with a group of Norwegian singers and granted permission for a Sangerfest to be held on Pier 3 in September. Thirsty Astorians gathered at 16th and Duane Sts. to watch city police officers pour 500 gallons of captured moonshine down the storm sewer.

The steamer Cape Romain of Atlantic, Gulf & Pacific Lines, loaded \$1,000,000 worth of canned salmon at Pier 2 during the third week of June and Alaska Steamship Co. announced it would begin regular service between Astoria and the Hawaiian islands. The Natoma moved upriver to dig two stranded Benson log rafts out at Wallace slough.

The second major fire of the year wiped out the Astoria Box Co. plant at 38th and Bond Sts. on June 30 while the manager, W. P. O'Brien, was out of the city. Loss was placed at \$150,000. On the following morning, embers ignited the firm's dry kilns, reducing them to ashes and adding another \$200,000 to the loss.

Major Richard Park of the Engineers reported on July 11 that the bar channel was now 43 feet deep at mean low water and could handle any vessel then afloat. A lady with a telescope reported to police that a large number

of men bathed daily in the nude near the port docks but they were never apprehended.

On July 19, Roger Pinneo signed a contract with American Car. Co. to move an entire railroad system through the port on ships of the Admiral line. Destined for North China, part of the shipment was later diverted to Seattle docks by the War Shipping Board. By July 28, the longshore payroll at the Port of Astoria had reached \$30,000 a day. Additional business generated by Pinneo included promises from Yamashita Kaisen Kaisha and Furness, Withy & Co. to establish direct service to Australia and the United Kingdom.

On Aug. 18, the railroad cut passenger fares between Astoria and Portland to \$1 in an attempt to wipe out competition from the river boats but the fast propellor Iralda countered with a fare of 55 cents. The low fares lasted until Sept. 30 when the Iralda was taken off the run for the winter. The railroad went back to a \$3 fare.

By the end of September, the port was receiving a trainload of wheat every other day as a steady progression of vessels entered the slips. Ambrose, Ridell & Co., the firm which had operated coal bunkers on Pier 2 during the war, resumed the operation.

The Natoma was laid up for repairs in Portland on Oct. 18 when the commissioners named the port's first budget committee. Members were Charles Callender, F. I. Dunbar, L.L. Paget, William Larson and John Tait. Port traffic became so heavy on Oct. 25 that some cargo destined for Honolulu had to be left on Pier 2.

Emory Prouty announced on Nov. 2 that he planned to build a sawmill at Warrenton to replace one which was lost by fire at Timber. The port budget committee came up with a figure of \$266,050 at the Nov. 8 meeting designating \$225,552.17 to be used as interest on the bonded debt. For once, the Port of Portland agreed with the Astorians, this time in a bid to obtain three liners which the Shipping Board had declared were available.

At a meeting early in December, the commissioners sold

\$20,000 in bonds to Freeman, Smith & Camp of Portland on a bid of \$965.90. Stone announced that the port had made a profit of \$1,893 in September.

A dirt fill to connect the Smith point road with the Olney road was authorized by Clatsop county at a cost of \$60,000. The Natoma got the fill job and earned \$33,723.44 for the port. The city of Warrenton held a special election on Dec. 9 and voted to give a section of municipal waterfront to Prouty for his new sawmill. The next day, Pinneo was informed that neither Astoria or Portland would get the surplus Shipping Board vessels. They went to Seattle and San Francisco.

Capt. J. B. Saunders of the Matson Lines arrived Dec. 19 to inspect port facilities and O'Brien and McGregor bought the Clatsop mill.

Pilots crossing the bar reported that the rock fill of the south jetty was sinking, leaving islands of stone where there should be a solid breakwater. Flavel shoal, west of Pier 3, was silting badly, according to Army Engineers.

On Dec. 24, the steam schooner Trinidad began loading lumber at Warrenton. She was the largest vessel to enter the Skipanon river up to that time with a draft of 21 feet.

Matson Lines announced on Jan. 7, 1922, that vessels of its fleet would thereafter make Astoria a regular port of call, another triumph for Roger Pinneo.

Port commissioners notified the Army Engineers that the Flavel bar was becoming a hindrance to ocean traffic and were told in turn that the port must pay for any work done on the channel. Funds appropriated by congress for improvement of the esfuary had been exhausted. On the east coast, Hill's liner Great Northern was renamed "Columbia" and became flagship of a navy patrol force.

W. P. O'Brien resigned as president of the Chamber of to devote his time to what he called the "menace of the Ku Klux Klan."

The Shipping Board summoned Pinneo to Washington to

discuss shipping affairs and for the first time since the port was established Treasurer Patton dipped into red ink. The monthly report showed a loss of \$800 for the month of December, 1921.

In May, B. F. Stone said the firm he managed, Elmore Packing Co., would go out of business on July 1 after 40 years on the Astoria waterfront. Today, part of the cannery Elmore built houses offices of the Bumble Bee Seafoods division of Castle & Cook and is designated a national landmark.

Construction material for the new naval base began to arrive in great quantities on June 9 and Astoria police added patrols to guard against a Chinese tong war which had broken out across the nation

The sprinkler system on Pier 3 was completed July 25 and early in August voters recalled Sheriff Ole Nelson for abusing denizens of "the bad lands." Prouty's Warrenton mill sawed its first log on Aug. 14 and Henry Makela drove the first piling for a new downtown hotel three days later.

The port commissioners announced on Aug. 22 that they would expand the grain elevator and Port of Portland showed plans for a new pilot boat to replace the two tugs operating on the bar.

A. B. Hammond's sawmill in Uppertown burned to the water on Sept. 11 but this did not prevent the county fair from opening on schedule 10 days later at the port docks. Fire in the coal bunkers of the Etna Maru, loading at Pier 2, was extinguished on Oct. 2 by Astoria firemen and B. F. Stone announced he was a candidate for mayor of Astoria.

Manager Bartlett was authorized to sell another \$55,000 in bonds to pay for the Pier 3 sprinkler system and to call for bids on additional grain handling equipment. Astoria Electric Co. was awarded a contract for installation of a new conveyor on a bid of \$1,449.

Headquarters of the Industrial Workers of the World called for a general strike along the west coast on Oct. 24 but the gangs of longshoremen failed to quit work and a

"Wobbly" invasion of Portland was called off. The steamer Santa Clara of Pacific Mail Line sank the dredge Portland in Portland harbor, killing three men.

In November, port commissioners trimmed \$32,000 from the budget. The Ku Klux Klan ticket swept the Astoria election of Nov. 8 and a dozen ships lay idle in Youngs bay awaiting charters. The dredge Col. P. S. Michie struck Peacock spit on the way in from Grays Harbor on Nov. 10 and went into drydock in Portland.

In a financial statement released Nov. 29, Chairman Stone presented the following list of the port's assets:

Bonds, unsold	\$25,000
Delinquent taxes	\$93,867.27
Taxes due	\$7,891.17
Cash on hand	\$89,038.27
Accounts due (Good)	\$4,154.93
Accounts due (Doubtful)	\$32,358.31
Due on bonds sold	\$55,000
Accrued bond interest	<u>\$1,375</u>
TOTAL	\$343,045.85

The same report set the 1923 budget at \$233,927.70 and Stone revealed that there was an additional \$60,000 in a separate bank account. On Dec. 3, Pinneo reported that the port was receiving between 25 and 30 carloads of wheat a day from the Montana growers. On Dec. 5, the commissioners asked congress for an appropriation to continue work on the Skipanon channel.

W. P. Kinney, vice president of Great Northern railroad, visited Astoria on Dec. 7 and promised that the port would continue to receive favorable rates on wheat shipments.

It had been a year of fires throughout the state and that evening the Associated Press reported the death of seven persons in a fire at Eugene.

At 2 A. M. on Dec. 8, 1922, a fire began on Commercial St. between 10th and 11th Sts. which was to wipe out 24 blocks of Astoria's business district, leave 2000 homeless, and cause a loss of more than \$12,000,000.

Chapter Ten REHABILITATION

Following the devastating fire of December 8, 1922, Portland citizens donated \$53,000 to aid in relief of the homeless victims and Vincent Astor contributed another \$5,000. Members of the port commission headed various groups engaged in reconstruction. Byron Stone moved headquarters of his Astoria Shipping Co. to the warehouse on Pier 1 while workmen were building new offices for him in the Sanborn warehouse at the foot of 11th St.

Three of the four Astoria banks waited for the vaults to cool and then moved their funds into the county court house where sailors from the destroyer Yarborough mounted a machine gun to protect the money. Only two fatalities came as a result of the fire, one by heart attack, the other a suicide. Rotary International began holding meetings on Pier 1 and both bar and river pilots moved into the Sanborn warehouse. Housing was at a premium.

Downtown businessmen sought temporary locations along Astor St. where the vacant saloons and cribs, "the shells that once sheltered shame," provided shelter for their meager stocks.

White Man's alley, the street which connected Astor St. with Chinatown on Bond St. was blocked by a temporary shack which housed a clothing store. The Green Light, You and I, and The Mug saloons disappeared completely. The Anchor was denatured into a cigar store and The Wigwam building housed a department store. The Elk's lodge and the plant of the Daily Astorian occupied the Louvre and even the sign was gone from the Bunker Hill rooms, one of the most notorious of the dives. Pete's Place was transformed into a plumbing shop.

At the first port meeting, held on Jan. 10, 1923, G. Clifford Barlow, a Warrenton groceryman and head of that city's booster committee, was seated as a member of the

port commission. Barlow's first act was to introduce a resolution requiring that all port employes be required to hold at least first citizenship papers. The motion passed.

The commissioners also endorsed the actions of the city police who had arrested a number of Industrial Workers of the World on charges of inciting to riot. The annual report revealed that 298 vessels had loaded at the port during 1922 compared to 160 the year before. Exports had included 470,000 cases of canned salmon.

At the request of Pt. Adams Packing Co., boat storage fees were set at \$1 a month with an added fee of \$20 for use of the port's boat lift. At the same time, Pt. Adams was turned down on a request to establish a cannery on Pier 3.

The port officials signed a contract with Gilpin Construction Co. on March 6 to open a channel to the naval base site at Tongue point and to fill behind a bulkhead then under construction. The Natoma was moved up from the Skipanon river to perform the work. Gilpin had been given a contract to build the new base on a bid of \$190,000.

"The Astoria" was the name selected for the new downtown hotel, scheduled to open prior to Feb. 1. Russell W. Skallerud, partner in a drygoods firm who had been elected to the port commission just prior to the big fire, resigned and was replaced by John Tait, a member of the budget committee.

Frank Sweet was replaced on the state board of pilots by Capt. Charles Gunderson of Seaside, a retired bar pilot who had become interested in Astoria real estate. Crown Willamette Pulp & Paper Co. revealed plans to erect a paper mill and a power dam at Youngs river falls.

The cutter Tamaroa under command of Cmdr. W. K. Thompson arrived to take station at Tongue point when the Algonquin went north on a seven-month patrol of the seal islands. The Tamaroa was the former steamer Bartilone, built in 1919 in New Jersey, and carried a crew of 26.

When the Port of Portland boosted fees for ferrying bar pilots from \$10 to \$30 on April 12, the pilots severed all connection with the Portland group. Capt. Gunderson

came out of retirement to take over the pilot schooner Joseph Pulitzer, which had been laid up on the mud flats at St. Johns for three years, and the bar pilots were on their own for the first time in many years.

On July 1, the Astoria customs office reported that canned salmon valued at \$2,000,000 had been shipped through the port during the first six months of the year.

Frank Smith poured his stock of moonshine into a bucket of mop water and dumped it on the floor of his restaurant on Astor St. while police battered down the door. The officers mopped up enough of the liquid to get a conviction. At the July 10 meeting, Leander Lebeck was given a contract to remove a supply shed, machine shop, foundry and blacksmith shop from Pier 2 to make room for lumber storage. The buildings had been left when Rodgers shipyard was removed from the pier.

Commissioner Prouty was granted 60 days leave due to ill health and Manager Bartlett was instructed to write a formal letter of inquiry to Commissioner Barlow who had failed to attend three consecutive meetings.

On July 20, the Washington grain growers asked aid of that state's Bureau of Public Works in putting an end to the 10 per cent rate differential enjoyed by Portland over Astoria and Puget Sound. Chairman Stone granted permission for the county fair again to be held on Pier 3 and auditors reported that port traffic was up 32 per cent over the previous year. The Natoma showed earnings of \$11,000 for the month of July.

The commissioners authorized installation of a floor conveyor in Sections 4 and 6 of the Pier 1 warehouse and opened discussions regarding establishment of an industrial area on port property. Arsonists were blamed for a fire on August 28 which wiped out the Columbia Planing Mill and much of the Wilson shipyard only a few hundred yards from the port docks.

The port faced a deficit of \$4,100 late in August due to the slowness of taxpayers in paying up but Bartlett obtained a 30 day extension on a \$15,000 note owed to

Astoria National Bank. Gilpin had not yet paid the \$12,000 due for the Natoma's work in August at Tongue point.

The Clatsop county fair opened Sept. 21 on Pier 3 with the usual display of needlework, patchwork quilts and giant pumpkins. While Capt. O. P. Rankin, the bar pilot, was away at sea, the other pilots entered his shepherd dog, "Caesar", in the fair's annual dog show. The animal took first prize.

The dredge Col. P. S. Michie finally arrived on the river with Capt. A. E. Cann as pilot and began dredging the Flavel shoal. It had been almost two years since the port officials had reported to Army Engineers that the bar off Tansy point was silting badly.

J. A. Rankin, manager of A. B. Hammond's properties in Clatsop county, said Hammond was still undecided about rebuilding his burned out sawmill in Uppertown and the Chamber of Commerce asked the county court to provide a road to Lewis and Clark's old Fort Clatsop.

Port commissioners gave permission early in November for establishment of a fumigation plant at the port. A shipload of Chinese cotton was expected at the docks and Harry N. Luckenby of Seattle thought he could make a profit through fumigating the bales, a process required by law. Due to transportation difficulties in central China, the shipment never arrived.

Since bunker fuel oil was in short supply in Astoria, Pacific Power & Light Co. began conversion of the new light plant for use of hog fuel. Docks were built on the bay shore to receive barge loads of sawmill waste.

The auditors reported on Nov. 13 that the port had received 1486 carloads of wheat during the season compared with 235 carloads the year before. The Natoma again pulled the port out of a hole in October by earning \$13,000 from dredging at Tongue point. As preparation of the naval base site neared completion, the power company announced it intended to give up its franchise and abandon street car service. Increase in the number of privately owned automobiles had made the street railway unprofitable.

When Chairman Stone called for comments from the floor at the Nov. 27 port meeting, spectators criticized the commissioners for construction of Pier 3, declaring the project a waste of taxpayer's money. Stone produced figures which showed that the pier was breaking even and would soon begin to show a profit.

An increasing demand for the flour produced in Astoria caused Astoria Flouring Mills to reopen its original plant at the foot of 2nd St. Operation cost for operating the Natoma through 1924 was budgeted at \$42,640. Since the port's dredge had averaged \$12,000 in earnings, this figure appeared to be a bargain. Commissioner Emory Prouty told fellow commissioners he had purchased the Schmidt sawmill on Cullaby lake to add to his production. The mill was turning out 40,000 feet of spruce lumber every day.

A tragic accident took the life of a worker at the port elevator on Dec. 1, 1923, when Harry Andrews, a grain scaler, fell to his death from the personnel elevator at the grain bins. On Dec. 4, Astoria finally was granted parity with California ports in grain rates from Montana and the Snake river basin. Coast Guard officials announced that the cutter Haida would be stationed at the Tongue point base.

At the meeting of Dec. 11, commissioners were told that income from taxes would be \$27,190 short of meeting interest payments on the bonded indebtedness. Tracks on Pier 2 were sagging and it became unsafe to haul loaded coal cars out to the bunkers. It was estimated that new stringers under the rails would cost \$8,000.

Faced with \$75,000 in bonds due to mature Jan. 1, Byron Stone went downtown to the banks and borrowed the money.

Pay of longshoremen was raised on Dec. 19 from 80 cents an hour to 90 cents, placing an added burden on the port. After 15 years of trying, the Port of Portland finally convinced customs officials that it was unnecessary for Portland-bound ships to check in at the Astoria office before proceeding upriver. Passenger railroad fare between Astoria and Portland was cut from 3 to 2 cents per mile.

John Tait, the Warrenton groceryman who had been named

a member of the port commission immediately following the great fire, resigned on Dec. 29, claiming he could not spare the time away from his private business. He was replaced on Jan. 8, 1924, by William P. O'Brien, manager of Astoria, Box Co., over the objection of Commissioner Barlow.

The Natoma began pumping sand for the fill along Commercial St. on Jan. 28 and that afternoon Pacific Power & Light Co. offered its street railway to the city of Astoria.

Seven ships were loading at the port docks on Feb. 7 when Dreamland skating rink and dance hall burned to the ground, depriving younger Astorians of a gathering place.

By Feb. 22, when the new Hotel Astoria was dedicated, the port was unloading a train load of wheat daily. Money was due for the dredging at Tongue point and the commissioners began discussions on additions to the grain handling equipment.

On Feb. 27, the British ship Benavon dumped 200 tons of ballast on the waterfront, ballast which had been dredged from the bottom of the Yangste river. This sandy soil later was leveled off to provide a base for the Union Oil Company's storage tanks. The Natoma returned briefly to Tongue point on the following day and on March 3 the port's grain testing laboratory was moved to Pier 1 from a shack on Taylor St.

Astoria Transit Co. was the sole bidder March 10 for the street car line and was granted a franchise by the city council 10 days later.

The city engineer threatened on March 14 to close Taylor St. to traffic because of the poor condition of the trestle and the port commissioners met in special session to consider repairs. It took them four days to decide they could afford to repair the trestle. At a second special session on April 3, Capt. TenBrook was authorized to move the Natoma down from Tongue point and begin filling the mud flats along Taylor St. That same day, street paving began in downtown Astoria.

L.L. Paget, cashier of the Seaside bank, announced on

April 5 that he would seek the port commission seat soon to be vacated by Emory Prouty. Prouty had decided not to run again since he now had three sawmills operating in the county and these took most of his time.

On April 8, the port entered suit against Astoria Marine Iron Works for \$10,000 which officials said was due in back rent for space on Pier 2. Byron Stone filed to succeed himself.

The claim against Astoria Marine was settled when that firm agreed to pay \$2,000 cash and to turn over to the port the fire protection equipment it had installed on Pier 2. The sprinkler system, hoses, hose carts and other equipment had been purchased by the firm at a cost of \$17,000. All machinery owned by Astoria Marine was ordered off port property immediately.

At the same meeting, port auditors reported that there was a balance of \$1,678.72 in the general fund and \$7,641 in the bond interest fund. Bartlett was authorized to hire a night watchman in an attempt to halt pilfering on Pier 2.

A. G. Spexarth announced on April 12 that his group, the Astoria Improvement Association, would build a public landing at the foot of Eighth St. By April 18, the port had received 203 carloads of wheat, a new 15-day record.

Commissioners were told on April 22 that Standard Oil Co. would spend in excess of \$1,000,000 on a proposed depot at Pier 3. They voted to redeem \$22,000 in bonds and to pay off \$5,000 owed to downtown banks. The money from the naval base contractor had come in.

On April 29, congress appropriated \$2,000,000 for the improvement of facilities in the estuary but this action was rescinded a week later.

In the downtown area, paving of Commercial St. began and fire wiped out eight business places at 13th & Exchange Sts. Railroad officials promised to replace the old depot, which was about to topple off its piling, as soon as plans were approved by higher headquarters. A structure to be known as the Astor building was planned for the site of the Weinhard hotel.

The customs office reported on May 2 that exports from the Port of Astoria already exceeded those of the previous year by \$2,000,000 and both flour mills began operating 24 hours a day. Most of the export tonnage had been in flour and wheat. Four underwater mines were exploded in the Tongue point channel on May 5 where the Natoma had encountered bed rock at a depth of 26 feet. Paving of Commercial St. was completed on the following day.

"Gold Tooth Louie" Ossenberg, operator of a notorious dive on Astor St. before prohibition, told state agents he had heard there were a few bootleggers around but that he didn't know any of them. He was reputed to be the largest purveyor of "moon" in the city.

As primary election day neared, five candidates entered the lists for seats on the port commission. They were Byron Stone and William P. O'Brien, running for reelection, and L.L. Paget, J.W. Bartlett and Sam Webb. Bartlett owned novelty stores in Astoria and Seaside and expected to garner votes through having the same name as the port manager. Both daily papers published editorials against the candidacy of Webb, a sawmill employe.

On May 15, Stone, Paget and O'Brien were elected. Webb ran avery poor last.

During the week of May 20, 12 ships loaded 1038 tons of outbound cargo, bringing to 3755 the number of carloads of wheat handled by the port since July 1 of 1923. This meant better than 5,000,000 bushels. Roger Pinneo had been away much of the time, attending various rate hearings and contacting shippers throughout the northwest and the results of his efforts were beginning to appear.

At the meeting of May 27, the commissioners voted to install a new grain hopper, authorized Henry Makela to drive 200 fender piles around Pier 2, and voted to spend \$100 for membership in the Coast Foreign Trade Council. J.W. Bartlett threatened on the following day to contest the election of the new commissioners but subsided when he found there was no legal leg to stand on.

Standard Oil Co. began construction of its tank farm

and a pipe line to Pier 2 on June 4 and Republicans elected Commissioner O'Brien Clatsop county chairman. New ICC rate hearings began in Walla Walla following renewed protests by the grain shippers and G. C. Fulton was appointed to represent the port and the city of Astoria.

For once, the railroad interests agreed with the Astorians and the Puget Sound people that Portland's 10 per cent advantage was unfair. Testifying before hearing officer F. M. Weaver, Portland relied on its shorter haul and water level route to maintain the current rates.

On July 1, the city council officially voided the street car franchise and Columbia Stage Lines began operating buses over the old routes.

The fiscal report of July 1 revealed that the port had moved 3979 carloads of wheat during the year and that cargo handled during June had been double that of the previous year.

"A New Astoria" was the slogan adopted for the July 4 observance as Astorians celebrated remarkable recovery ~~from~~ from the fire of 18 months before with Dorothea Prael as Miss Astoria. The Portland Elk's band paraded downtown before a new temple cornerstone was laid for the temple at Eleventh and Duane Sts.

The Natoma moved upriver to the foot of Twentieth St. and began filling land for the foundation of a new railroad station. At Thirteenth and Duane streets, John Slotte and George Stevens dug deeply into the wet sand and recovered "Shark" rock, relic of an early shipwreck now at the Columbia River Maritime Museum.

A popular young lady, Leila Niemi, broke her neck on July 19 while diving from the beach west of Pier 3 and Henry Makela completed the fender work on Pier 1 three days later. He said he was ready to start on Pier 2 fenders.

The Natoma returned to the port to clear out Slip 1 early in August and auditors reported that the port had earned a profit of \$26,906.70 between Jan 1 and June 30.

Across the river, W. T. Montgomery began collecting funds to build a narrow gauge railroad along the north shore.

Chapter Eleven REDEMPTION

Port commissioners met Aug. 11, 1924, with the Clatsop county fair board regarding a site for the 1924 county fair but there was no way to get around the fact that every foot of space on Pier 3 was piled to the roof with cargo.

Members of the fair board were forced to look for a new location and finally settled on Eighth and Bond Sts. where some space was available in nearby buildings. Part of the warehouse on Pier 3 was occupied by lumber left from the Rogers shipyard which the port was later to claim.

Admiral Luther Gregory met with the commissioners and told them there would be a delay in completing the naval base since congress was reluctant to part with funds. There was also opposition from a number of high navy officers.

Railroad men reported that the trestle connecting the port's belt line with the S. P. & S. main line was in bad shape and would have to be repaired before further use. Cost was estimated at \$15,000.

During the lunch hour on Aug. 22, port employes raised a 100-foot flag pole in the grassy circle in front of the port offices at Pier 1. The pole had been retrieved from the river, flotsam from some upstream raft.

While 13 ships loaded at the docks during the week of Aug. 25, workmen began construction of a building on port property to house the Freeland Table Co. The firm manufactured furniture and Roger Pinneo had persuaded its owners to move to the port, nearer the raw material. This was one of Pinneo's major mistakes since the firm went bankrupt in a few months.

With the weather abating, the Natoma again moved across river to work on the new ferry landing at Megler. Manager Bartlett called on Clatsop county commissioners to add one per cent to the tax levy to pay for the fill needed

for the Standard Oil plant. Under an agreement with Standard, the port was to receive \$400 for each tanker of oil discharged at the port and another \$400 for each ship which fueled at the docks. The fill was expected to cost \$35,000.

On Oct. 6, Edgar Smith announced that Astoria Flouring Mills had signed a contract with the Pillsbury Co. and with Washburn-Crosby Co. to supply the west coast and Alaska with flour under those two brand names. On the 20th, A. B. Hammond and other stockholders sold Columbia River Packers association to a syndicate of Astoria and Portland bankers.

While making his rounds on the night of Oct. 24, the night watchman discovered three juvenile runaways who had been living on wheat for almost a week while hiding on Pier 2. They were fed a square meal and returned to Portland by Sheriff Slusher. Later in the month, the port asked city officials for a signed contract covering the work of the Natoma on Taylor St. The port commissioners wanted to make sure they were paid.

On Oct. 30, A. B. Hammond said in San Francisco he would not rebuild his Astoria sawmill because of the Oregon Income tax. He said it was cheaper to manufacture lumber in California and thus avoid the tax.

In mid November, a county crew began paving the Smith point road and Roger Pinneo hurried to Salt Lake City on the trail of some export cargo. The Natoma underwent minor repairs and then began the Taylor St. fill, a project which was halted on Dec. 1 when the dredge crew went on strike. B. F. Stone contacted Oregon's congressional delegation to get the members solidly behind an Astoria naval base.

On Dec. 16, the mercury dipped to 16 at Astoria and ice clogged the river above St. Helens. During the dense fog which ensued, Cmdr. W. P. Wishaar took the cutter Algonquin upstream to serve as an icebreaker. The sturdy vessel managed to break through to Portland, opening a path to smaller landings as she went. 1924

The annual report of the auditors, released Dec. 31, showed that exports during 1924 from the Port of Astoria were valued at \$9,258,457. Included in the outbound cargo was 800

million feet of lumber, a new record for the river.

At the meeting of Jan. 6, 1925, L.L. Paget, the Seaside bank cashier, was sworn in as the new member and Byron Stone was reelected president. R. R. Bartlett, G. C. Fulton and Frank Sweet retained their positions and W. A. Tyler was named port treasurer.

The Natoma resumed work on the Taylor St. fill on ~~Mar.~~ Mar. 31 and Barbey Packing Co. leased the Schmidt freezing plant east of the port. Engineers discovered that the Natoma was pumping silt only from the bottom of the river and the material was running over the bulkhead as fast as it came in. Crewmen rigged a 1500-foot pipeline and moved the dredge to the north side of the channel where the sand was coarse. The material along the shore line and in front of the port docks proved to be too liquid for use as fill.

The port commissioners voted on April 9 to issue another \$500,000 in bonds and both of Astoria's daily newspapers published editorials critical of the high salary paid to Roger Pinneo. He was drawing \$15,000 a year. After April 18, when the Natoma began pumping from the middle sands, progress on the Taylor St. project was rapid. The new railroad depot was dedicated May 6 on the foundation provided by the Natoma.

Harkins Transportation Co. leased the 400-foot Sanborn dock between Eleventh and Twelfth Sts. as a landing place for its fleet of Portland steamers. Admiral Line announced that the former liner Great Northern, now the H.F. Alexander, would begin running on the east coast.

Capt. Oscar Ecklund of the Pt. Adams Coast Guard station sighted a small buoy drifting near the Flavel shoal and ordered his crew to investigate. Attached to the buoy was one case of Canadian whiskey and 20 sacks containing Imperial quarts. Capt. Ecklund summoned federal agents.

Roger Pinneo headed for Washington, D. C., where he hoped to persuade the Shipping Board to allot one of the fast Oriental steamers to the Columbia river trade. The Port of Portland also was anxious to obtain on the the vessels, anxious enough to pay Pinneo's expenses for the trip.

Pinneo got back on June 8 to find that he had been ap-

pointed a member of the shipping committee of the National Chamber of Commerce. D. H. Welch complained to commissioners that the Natoma was playing havoc with his fishing drift north of the ship channel.

In New York, F. C. Harley, Astoria's colorful ex-mayor, announced he was a candidate for mayor of the world's largest city. Harley had tried earlier for the governorship of Oregon. He was now chairman of the National Liberal Alliance, a group of honest drinking people opposing the Anti-Saloon League, and he had filed suits alleging libel against the League and its director, Wayne Wheelock. Harley lost both the suit and the election.

Capt. A. A. Langkilde, a bar pilot, brought three navy submarines in across the Columbia bar on June 11 with the battleship Oregon following close behind. Capt. R. F. Caples, a river pilot, applied several coats of stove polish to the ancient coal stove in the pilot's office, covering up the match scratches and tobacco stains.

Col. A. E. Clark was named to head a 24-man committee dedicated to obtaining the naval base for Astoria and the Army Engineers reported that the bar was now 46 feet deep and 2000 feet wide.

The port finally sold its \$500,000 bond issue on July 1 to J. C. Mayer Co. of Cincinnati at a \$5,000 premium. The bonds were to run for 50 years and the money was to be used to retire the issue of July 1, 1920. Port Treasurer W. A. Tyler, said the deal would save the port \$189,500 in interest payments. Roger Pinneo remained only briefly before leaving for Helena to attend a new ICC hearing, this one called at the request of the Montana grain dealers who were still not satisfied with shipping rates. Secretary Curtis D. Wilbur of the navy telegraphed on July 16 that he planned to make a personal inspection of Tongue point and on the following morning S. A. Ironside, who had been the port's general agent for two years, resigned when he was told his salary would be cut. Reacting to public criticism, the commissioners were about to begin a period

of retrenchment.

At the meeting of July 28, Capt. TenBrook reported that the Taylor St. fill was completed after a year of off and on work by the Natoma. Secretary Wilbur told the Astoria Chamber of Commerce there were no funds available for completion of the Tongue point base.

Port commissioners voted to look into the Seattle grain exchange which was offering memberships at \$1,000 each. Roger Pinneo returned from Helena and commissioners offered to renew his contract for the coming year with a \$3000 reduction in salary. His current contract was due to expire Jan. 1, 1926. Prior to the next meeting, the commissioners met in executive session and afterward offered the traffic manager a four-year contract at \$12,000 a year. Pinneo asked for 30 days to consider the offer.

Bartlett told members of the county fair board that the county fair could be held again on Pier 3 in September. The port manager reported that the port had been invited to enter a float in a lodge parade to be held in Portland but the commissioners voted the plan down when they learned the cost of the venture.

On Aug. 26, the port billed the city of Astoria for \$151,000 for services of the Natoma in filling behind the bulkhead along Taylor St. The charge was based on 14 cents per yard while the cost of operating the Natoma on the project had been 9.3 cents a yard. Manager Bartlett told commissioners that the port slips were now 40 feet deep at low water.

Auditors reported on Sept. 1 that the port had shipped 93,522 cases of salmon during August, an all time record since the beginning of the port. That afternoon the customs bureau restored the stop at Astoria for Portland-bound ships.

At the end of his 30 days of consideration, Pinneo announced on Sept. 8 that he would not accept a new contract and offered a letter of resignation. The resignation was tabled. Pinneo said he could agree with the terms offered by the port but that he felt he had made too many enemies

to be comfortable any longer at the Port of Astoria.

N. H. Fellman, a local merchant, appeared at the Sept. 22 meeting and reported that he and Frank Patton were ready to take over the lease and assets of the bankrupt Freeland Table Co. During discussions at this meeting, both Stone and Barlow said they were opposed to paying more than \$10,000 a year for a traffic manager.

Lumber left in the Pier 3 warehouse was sold for \$3,900 to cover storage charges and the commissioners promised that dredging of the Skipanon turning basin would be completed when money was available. The Rivers and Harbors committee of congress wrote the port on Oct. 1 that a federal grant to complete the Skipanon project was "not advisable."

On Oct. 27, the commissioners voted to ask for sealed bids on a \$230,000 issue of 20-year bonds. The lease of the furniture plant to Hellman and Patton was approved finally at a special meeting on Nov. 4. Money was becoming a problem throughout the lower river area and the Astoria municipal band announced it was disbanding due to lack of funds.

A new budget committee composed of C. H. Watzek, F. I. Dunbar, S. W. Lovell, J. E. Oates and Dave Tweedie, met for the first time on Nov. 10 and a week later presented the budget for 1926.

Total budget items amounted to \$647,892.94 of which \$335,688 was to be raised by tax levy. The budget was \$48,000 under the 1925 figure. At the same meeting, J.C. Mayer & Co. purchased the \$230,000 bond issue at 102.11, paying a premium of \$4,855. A rumor reached Astoria that Crown Willamette Pulp & Paper Co. had been sold to a syndicate of bankers, a matter in which the port was much interested since the firm was the county's largest taxpayer.

There was no opposition to the port levy at a hearing on Dec. 8 and the commissioners voted to issue \$30,000 in six per cent warrants to run until overdue tax money came in. The delinquent tax list at the county court house grew longer daily.

On Dec. 11, the Great Northern railroad announced it would join Vincent Astor in building a monument on Coxcomb hill to commemorate the Lewis and Clark exploration of 1805.

Once again in funds, the commissioners voted on Dec. 22 to retire \$281,000 in bonds and to send \$171,000 to the New York bankers as interest on the bond debt.

After five years on the job, Roger Pinneo left the port on Jan 1. and the commission waited 12 days before selecting a replacement. The new traffic manager was Walter Nelson, a former shipping agent for the port, who had been working as manager of the Astoria Shipping Co. for the two previous years. The Natoma got it's first contract for 1926 on Jan. 16 when the Long-Bell Lumber contracted for services of the big dredge in providing a fill at the new port of Longview.

The auditors reported on Feb. 7 that \$41,443 had been spent for port improvements in 1925 and that same week workmen began leveling the top of Coxcomb hill as a site for the proposed tower. A. Guthrie & Co. got the contract to build the Astoria column.

Business picked up during the month since the port shipped cargo valued at \$323,743 during February. Byron Stone told fellow commissioners that the port had collected \$8,500 during 1925 from industrial firms operating on port property. The February cargo amounted to 17,456 tons and went out in 33 ships.

Excavation started March 8, 1926, on a hole 10 feet deep which was to hold the foundation for the monument on Coxcomb hill. The port's dredge engineer, Capt. J. C. TenBrook announced he would be a candidate for the job of mayor of Astoria. He was a long time resident of the area, having come to Ft. Stevens as a civilian engineer during construction of the south jetty. Waterfront men were again startled on March 30 when Capt. Theodore Hansen ignored the tug Arrow No. 3 and brought the schooner North Bend in across the bar under full sail.

On March 23, the commissioners contracted for \$5,000 insurance to cover any cargo damage caused from leaks from the sprinkler system. They also signed a lease with Shell Oil Co. which planned to erect a distribution center on a 175 by 200 foot tract of port property. The plant displaced a stock corral and loading chutes which had been built by the first

port commission. Profit for January was \$3,490 on \$18,552.53 total income.

Pacific Newsprint Co. startled the commissioners with the announcement that a \$4,000,000 pulp and paper mill would be built on Youngs bay just east of the highway bridge.

The auditors reported on April 1 that 13,568 tons of cargo had passed through the port in March and the first concrete was poured into the tower foundation on Coxcomb hill. By April 8 the monument had reached a height of 12 feet. Decay of timbers on Pier 1 allowed the warehouse to settle and Byron Stone said immediate repairs were needed. Stone also revealed that the grain department and the belt line were losing money.

Roger Pinneo wrote from Seattle that he was back on his old job with Pacific Steamship Co. and word came from Washington that there was little chance of getting Tongue point improvement funds from the present congress. Port commissioners voted to remain neutral on Robert Dollar's bid to take over six ships of the Admiral Oriental line from the Shipping Board. The ports of Seattle, Portland, San Francisco and Astoria united in an appeal to the Coast Guard to station a cutter at Tongue point. While the Natoma was still working at Longview, the customs bureau ruled that any ship destined for river ports other than Portland would be required to check in at Astoria.

"Shark" rock again was uncovered at 13th and Exchange Sts. and Kiwanis members found that the wreck of the bark Industry was recorded on a side which had been buried for many years. Francis Clay ~~Harley~~ Harley, the one time mayor, stepped off the train and began a campaign immediately to repeal the national prohibition law. May cargo shipments totaled 15,835 tons.

Manager Bartlett was instructed at the June 8 meeting to gather material on costs of construction of a steel water tower at the port. The shore end of the Pier 3 warehouse was cleared in case the county fair board wanted it for the September celebration. Kiwanis members split the carved portion off Shark rock and planned to mount it

on Niagara St. on a concrete base. Steps were being placed around a steel center pole in the monument on Coxcomb hill on June 28 when A. Pusteria, an Italian artist, arrived to carve the frieze around the column. He planned to begin at the top with a representation of the seal of Oregon.

Four submarines and three other warships arrived on June 25 to inspect Tongue point and were greeted at the entrance by the boom of No. 2 gun at battery Mishler, firing for the first time in 16 years.

Reports for the first six months of 1926 showed that the port had handled 185,706 tons of cargo, up 31,502 tons over the same period in 1925.

Union Pacific railroad announced on July 12 it planned to begin ferry service between Astoria and Megler and at the port Manager Bartlett exhibited a model of Robert Gray's ship Columbia he had put together in his spare time.

Chapter Twelve

SATURATION

The Port of Astoria was entering its golden age of traffic on July 21, 1926, an era not to be exceeded until the coming of World War II.

The dredge Natoma was in drydock at St. Johns to get a coating of hull paint and the Astorians were beginning a two-day celebration of Founders day. The event opened with a grand street parade and two special trains arrived carrying celebrities who retraced by rail the route of the Lewis and Clark expedition. A feature of the gala was the dedication on July 22 of the Astor column on Coxcomb hill.

Port officials had agreed to send the Natoma to work on the Siuslaw bar but plans were changed when the Tacoma Dredging Co. made a better offer to dredge the channel on Tillamook bay. Followed by two barges loaded with equipment, the big dredge headed south on Sept. 10. During that week, 14 ships loaded at the port docks and a report from the customs office revealed that 95,548 cases of canned salmon had been shipped during the week. During the following week, three ships loaded wheat, two took out lumber, two were filled to capacity with canned salmon and one took on a cargo of coal. A ninth vessel discharged pulp at Pier 3. More than 13,000 tons of wheat moved through the port in the week.

Manager Bartlett attended a meeting in Seattle and was elected president of the Northwest Rivers and Harbors Congress. During the third week of September, the port broke its own record, loading out 20 ships. Traffic Manager Walter Nelson revealed that port traffic was up 2.5 times the volume in 1925.

Steel for the new water tower arrived at the docks on Sept. 28 and the following day a crew from Pittsburgh-Des

Moines Steel Co. showed up unexpectedly to begin its erection. The firm had promised to start construction in October. The tower was to be 100 feet high and the tank at the top was designed to hold 100,000 gallons of water.

The September report showed that 53 ships had loaded at the port during the month compared to 40 the year before and that 640 freight cars had been unloaded at the docks.

Roger Pinneo wrote that he had been loaned to the city of Victoria, B.C., as a harbor consultant and A. V. Allen, one of the backers of the proposed paper mill on Youngs bay, told port commissioners that the completion of the project depended on contribution of \$200,000 from local citizens.

John Suomy & Co. was given the contract to build an addition to the Fellman Furniture Co. plant on a bid of \$5,930 and the commissioners approved a lease with that firm. Base rental was to be \$150 a month with \$50 to be added each month until the construction was paid for.

Capt. TenBrook reported the loss off Tillamook bar of a barge containing 1216 barrels of port-owned oil which had been destined for the Natoma.

C. H. Watzek, chairman of the port budget committee, said on Nov. 1 that the port levy for 1927 would be \$324,500, down \$11,128 from the 1926 levy. Salaries of a stenographer and a clerk were eliminated from the new budget and funds were added to pay a switchboard operator. Port revenues were expected to cover operating costs.

On Nov. 3, the port dredge engineer, J. C. TenBrook, was elected mayor of Astoria by a margin of 82 votes.

Herman Wise, pioneer merchant, former mayor of Astoria, and former postmaster, was elected county judge at the same election but died of a heart attack on Nov. 8 before he could take office.

At the meeting of Nov. 23, the 1927 budget was approved with only one spectator, A. G. Spexarth, in attendance. The commissioners voted to raze the wooden water tower which had supplied water for the sprinkler system but to preserve the wooden tank as a storage place for fish oil. The tank's staves were stored on Pier 3.

The commissioners were told late in November that there was still hope for establishment of the paper mill on Youngs bay, a project which they favored heartily since port traffic was dropping rapidly in volume.

Unfavorable weather and a world-wide drop in the price of wheat and lumber contributed to the loss of business. During the week ending Dec. 20, inbound cargo exceeded out-bound for the first time in the port's history.

Astoriens got a thrill that same day when Sheriff Slusher chased a car off the Sanborn dock in front of the pilot's office. The vehicle landed on the deck of the tug George M. Brown.

At the meeting of Dec. 28, Clifford Barlow announced his retirement after four years on the commission. He had received only 1287 votes in the May primary election, lowest of four candidates. Tonnage handled during December amounted to only 11,532, a sharp drop from the midsummer high. The port worked only 29 ships during the month.

At the first meeting of 1927, held on Jan 11, Chairman Stone read a letter from Rinneo stating that the former port traffic manager had been invited to stay on at Victoria.

Stone was sworn in to ~~his~~ start his 13th year as a port commissioner, 10 of which he had served as chairman. Also taking the oath were W. A. Tyler, who had been reelected, and A. G. Spexarth, the new member.

Cyanide was discussed as a replacement for sulphur in fumigation at the port but there was some objection since the users would have to wear gas masks. Stone reported that the coal bunkers were being removed from Pier 2 since very few ships were now using coal. On Jan. 10, the Standard Oil tanker El Segundo discharged 30,000 barrels of oil at the port.

The weather continued bad and traffic at the port continued to drop. Ships bound for Portland, fearful of floating ice in the river, halted at Pier 2 to rig wooden bow fenders.

On Jan. 25, the commissioners voted to redeck the face

of Pier 2 and to sell the former rum runner Metallic for unpaid wharfage fees. The vessel had been tied up at Pier 3 for months following the jailing of her owners.

The annual report, released Feb. 8, showed that the port had made a profit of \$35,999 during 1926. In addition, improvements paid for from port revenue included the steel water tower, at a cost of \$9,277.61, addition to the furniture factory, which took \$8,342.45 of port funds, and filling and grading Terminal Ave. This latter project cost the port \$3,745.28.

Rental from industrial firms on port property brought in \$20,300 during the year. Although \$175,000 in bonds had been retired, the port's bonded debt was still \$3,930,000.

A. V. Allen, the man behind the proposed Northwest Pulp & Paper Co. mill, told commissioners his firm now had enough funds to start construction but the matter of an adequate water supply was holding back the project. He said the state had granted permission to sell stock in the mill.

The Army Engineers reported on Feb. 28 that at 46 feet, the Columbie bar was now the deepest entrance on the coast.

Tonnage increased to 14,164 during February and early in March the Warrenton sawmill began delivery of lumber for the repair of Pier 2. Frank Sweet, the harbormaster, was appointed to the state board of pilots, replacing Capt. Charles Cunderson, the retired bar pilot who was now selling real estate in Seaside and Astoria.

Chairman Byron Stone added to his activities on April 11 when he leased the cannery properties operated on both sides of the river by Megler Packing Co.

On the following day, the commissioners voted to permit S. P. & S. to use the port's belt line in direct delivery of goods to merchants along the waterfront.

Locomotive crane No. 2, which had been acquired several years before, was not being used, according to Manager Bartlett, and he asked permission to trade it for a more mobile vehicle. There was a need for some motive power which could switch lumber flats around the docks.

A group of taxpayers appeared before the commission to ask that TenBrook's pay be cut from \$300 to \$200 a month since he was drawing \$100 a month as mayor of Astoria. Chairman Stone told them that the dredge captain was doing the work of three men at the port and that, if anything, he should be given a raise.

On April 21, St. Helens Paper Co. unloaded the first of 20 carloads of paper at the port docks as an experimental shipment. The Natoma returned from drydock where she had undergone repairs costing \$7500.

On April 29, in the face of dwindling traffic, the port issued a booklet extolling the virtues of using the Port of Astoria. Inside the cover was a full page portrait of Roger Pinneo, belatedly receiving due publicity. The week's cargo handle dropped to 170 tons.

At the meeting of May 9, the commissioners granted permission to the Odd Fellows lodge to hold a state convention on Pier 3 and Manager Bartlett reported that every tax dollar spent by the port returned \$3.13. Stone said it took an engineer to figure that one out.

The port paid out \$103,787.50 in bond interest on June 14, leaving only \$19,337 in the interest fund. That night, members of the Oregon National Guard, then encamped at Camp Clatsop, staged a public dance on Pier 3. Cargo handle for the week was 942 tons.

The steamer Minnesotan of the American-Hawaiian line, went out of control on July 11 and rammed her bow 45 feet into the face of Pier 3. The damage was estimated at \$6,357.20.

The Astoria Chamber of Commerce announced it would sell stock in the proposed paper mill as a public service and members held a special meeting to discuss acquisition of an airport in the Astoria area. The navy had recommended that such a port be established although no funds were promised.

The Natoma was towed upriver to Westport near the end of July to work on the channel and Manager Bartlett said he had been told to expect large shipments of wheat from growers

east of the mountains. While members of the Chamber of Commerce committee were looking over airport sites south of Youngs bay, Bartlett predicted that Astoria would some day have regular air line service. He visualized an air loop which would include Seattle, Hoquiam, Astoria and Portland, a route which was not to be established until 40 years later. Lumber shipments from the port during July amounted to 55,538,096 board feet.

By the middle of August, wheat was arriving at the port at the rate of 1000 tons daily and silt was presenting a problem at the grain dock. The Natoma was brought back hurriedly from Westport to clear the slips and during the week ending Aug. 27 wheat arrivals averaged 60 carloads a day.

Bartlett disposed of the No. 2 locomotive crane and used the money to buy a Fordson tractor for use on the docks.

On Sept. 3, the steamship West Nivaria went out of control while crossing from Altoona and crashed into the Sanborn dock, destroying the pilot's headquarters. Capt. Fritz Hirsch escaped seconds before the crash and Capt. Gus Anderson, a retired bar pilot, dropped dead when he was told of the disaster. Damage was estimated at \$25,000.

A total of 441 carloads of wheat were dumped at the port during August and the Natoma completed clearing of the slips on both sides of Pier 2 to a depth of 30 feet.

The port loaded out 3142 tons of wheat during the week ending Sept. 12 and a week later Edgar Smith announced that Astoria Flouring Mills was merging its two plants with Kerr, Gifford & Co. Port commissioners hailed this move as a sign of increasing business and gave their unanimous approval.

The county fair opened on Pier 3 on Sept. 20 but spirits dampened when it was announced that the First State Bank of Seaside had locked its doors to halt a run. L.L. Paget resigned from the port commission on Oct. 11 to take care of urgent business in Seaside and A. G.

Spexarth was named to take his place as port secretary. Two hundred and fifty longshoremen were working at the port on the morning of Oct. 25 when E. G. Bates of Gearhart was selected to replace Paget on the port commission. The vote was divided since two of the commissioners favored Capt. Charles Gunderson, retired bar pilot and former member of the state pilot board.

The port budget committee, C. H. Watzek, F. I. Dunbar, J. E. Oates, S. W. Lovell and C. W. Laughlin, met with the commissioners on Nov. 4 and projected a levy of \$324,000 for 1928. This was \$560 under the 1927 figure.

Outbound traffic during October accounted for 5,582,417 tons of cargo compared to September shipments of 1,524,320. tons.

Despite the temporary slump in mid summer, the port was nearing the end of its best year. The new water tower was functioning, interest on the bonds had been paid, The Industry Ave. fill had been completed and Manager Bartlett predicted rosy prospects for 1928.

The port was finally operating as the first commissioners had gambled that it would.

Chapter Thirteen

CONSOLIDATION

Since the belt line had been losing money, the 1923 port budget specified only \$2,000 for its operation while the \$5,000 allotted for running the Natoma remained the same as the previous year.

Early in November, 1927, the Navy Department granted permission to a number of trollers to moor their boats at the partially completed piers at Tongue point and many of them took advantage of the offer. They were to regret the move before many weeks.

On Nov. 22, Magnus & Co. of Cincinnati purchased \$100,000 in port refunding bonds at a premium of 102.76. To gain additional revenue, the commissioners leased space at the port to W. H. Tice of Seaside for his lock washer manufacturing plant. The navy brass continued to oppose an airport at Astoria through December and the receivers of the defunct Seaside bank offered to pay depositors 25 cents on the dollar.

On New Year's eve, 1928, the Warrenton Lumber Co. sawmill burned to the ground with a loss estimated at more than \$115,000. W. C. Tremblay, the manager, took a similar post with Astoria Box Co. Astoria Box also was in trouble since Sheriff Harley Slusher was threatening to sell the property to cover unpaid street assessments.

The original Ft. Stevens dock was destroyed by fire on the night of Jan. 25 but the loss was slight since a newer pier was untouched.

The city of Astoria made plans to ask for the Natoma's aid in dredging a public mooring basin at the foot of 18th St. although no funds were available. Byron Stone leased Megler's Brookfield plant for the second season. He told commissioners the port had shipped 26,639 tons of cargo in 40 ships during January.

Barbey Packing Co. purchased land east of the port from Sanborn-Cutting Co. on Feb. 17 and announced plans to build a freezing plant and cannery there to replace its operation at Flavel. O. A. Kratz resigned as Astoria city manager and was replaced by George Garrett.

Another blow fell on the city on Feb. 24 when the directors of Astoria National Bank ordered that institution's doors closed to halt a run which had developed during the day. The port suffered some inconvenience since its funds for daily expenses were on deposit in the bank. Commissioner W. A. Tyler attempted to raise funds to reopen the bank but the state examiner, W. C. Crawley, was appointed receiver and found that liabilities exceeded the assets. The city of Astoria took over Astoria Box. Co. to remove the pressure of \$150,101.95 in unpaid street assessments.

Prospective shipments of wheat made the port picture look rosy although silt was beginning to clog the ship channel off Piers 2 and 3. Manager Rennslaer Bartlett told Army Engineers that the silt was pouring out of Youngs bay. The Corps had just projected a 35-foot channel depth between Astoria and Portland.

When a gale blew up on March 27, most of the fishing boats still along the waterfront took shelter at the navy piers, a move which proved disasterous. When the wind shifted suddenly to the northeast, they were smashed against the piers. All of them were damaged and several were destroyed.

The port traffic manager, Walter Nelson, filed a protest with the ICC against a \$3 freight charge which was added on each ton of goods shipped to Astoria from the east coast. The Port of Seattle joined Astoria in the protest since Portland was not charged the extra fee.

With the approach of the May primary, seven candidates filed for positions on the port commission. The terms of Bates, Stone and O'Brien were due to expire and new candidates included Ira S. Miller, Capt. Charles Gunderson, J. E. Beezley, and a former commissioner, Gabriel Wingate. The commissioners voted to rebuild the locomotive crane.

J. R. Burke's cannery burned to the piling on April 12 and the following day officers of the proposed pulp and paper mill reported that all the stock had been sold and that the firm would commence building at once. Ground was broken at the mill site east of Youngs bay bridge on May 7. On the following day, the War Department reversed its position and declared in favor of funds for the Skipanon waterway project.

At the May 19 primary election, Byron Stone, Bates and Ira Miller were nominated

Nelson's monthly report showed that May shipments of canned salmon through the port amounted to 25,643 cases.

On June 5, a syndicate of Portland bankers bought the Astoria hotel for \$190,500 and on the 12th the port signed a contract with B. T. McBain, manager of the proposed pulp mill. The port agreed to haul pulp on its belt line for \$1.05 a ton. In addition, the commissioners voted to extend a credit of \$16,000 to encourage the new industry. This was not the first time the port had been taken nor was it to be the last.

On June 28, Oregon headquarters of the National Health Service was transferred to Portland although a one-man branch office was left in Astoria. Berthing space at the port for the Service launch Currie, which had been on a five year basis, was reduced to month by month rental.

Walter Nelson reported to commissioners that wheat shipments were 39% over those of 1925 and the June report showed that 4,700,943 feet of lumber passed through the port during the month. Most of it went to Japan and China.

Jess Miles and his son Roscoe, on a gillnet drift the night of July 12, were startled to find a full grown horse entangled in their net which was stretched across the middle sands. The animal broke free and the fishermen herded it ashore on Sand Island. They learned later that the horse had fallen from a seining dock upstream.

Gilpin Construction Co. got the contract to work on the city's 13th St. mooring basin and the Army Engineers bragged that the bar channel was growing wider and had reached a depth of 48 feet.

Near the end of July, battle was joined again over

grain rates, this time with Minneapolis shippers who wanted the grain to move eastward instead of to the west.

On July 28, the former budget committee member and port commissioner, John Tait, died at his home after a lingering illness. He had been born in Scotland 64 years before.

Port workmen began dismantling the ~~trestle~~ trestle between Taylor street and the docks on August 24 and once the piling was removed the Natoma began pumping sand for the fill. The planking was laid over the wet sand. From Washington, the surgeon general sent word that the Astoria quarantine would not be abandoned.

At the first meeting in August the first section of Pier 1 was leased to the Lower Columbia River Dairy Co-operative and that firm began immediate installation of its feed grinding machinery.

Once the roadway was filled in, the Natoma moved to 18th St. where the Gilpin employes already had begun work on the public mooring basin. The city of Astoria had appropriated \$2,000 for the project and the Chamber of Commerce members contributed and \$1,000. Work halted on Sept. 10 when the funds were exhausted. That same day, the Coast Guard announced that the new cutter Redwing would be transferred from Boston and would be stationed permanently at Tongue point.

Petitions were circulated in the downtown area calling for the resignation of Commissioner W. A. Tyler who had rented a home in Portland. Tyler refused to resign, saying his legal residence was still in Astoria. His opponents finally gave up.

The dairy feed plant went into operation on Sept. 25 and during the week ending Oct. 15 eleven ships loaded out 5273 tons of cargo. This was topped the following week when 5689 tons moved through the port.

The Natoma resumed dredging at 18th St. on credit and although the landing was not complete it was put to use by small craft. The dredge crew was startled when

the Natoma's cutting heads struck a small deposit of coal but the mystery was solved when one man recalled that a coal dock had once occupied the site.

At the meeting of Oct. 30, the budget committee cut \$25,000 from planned expenditures for 1929 and commissioners voted to apply \$100,000 on bond retirement. The total to be expended was \$574,029 with \$349,075 to be levied in taxes. The 1928 levy was 10 mills, that of 1929 was 12 mills. While the meeting was in progress, the new Longview customs office welcomed its first ship.

The Algonquin sailed south one of its extended cruises and was replaced in the river by the cutter Snohomish which was stationed at Port Angeles. The Snohomish was to stay only until arrival of the Redwing but people of the northern port expressed fear of losing their patrol craft. The lightship Columbia resumed her station off the mouth of the river on Nov. 22 after a layup of six months to have a new lighting system installed.

The Dec. 4 meeting of the port commission was held in St. Marys hospital, where Byron Stone was recovering from an attack of influenza, and members approved the budget for 1929.

Capt. Charles Gunderson, chairman of the state pilot board and former candidate for a seat on the commission, died Dec. 15. Three days later, Bartlett signed a four-year contract to manage the port, accepting a cut in salary from \$600 to \$500 a month. Traffic Manager Walter Nelson and Capt. TenBrook were given pay cuts of \$50 each. Harry Leckenby proposed to move his fumigation plant to Los Angeles and the port accepted a lien on his Seattle property to cover \$2,000 owed in back rent. Stored flour was moved from Pier 1 to Pier 3, filling the warehouse to capacity, and on Dec. 28 the quarantine launch was returned from Portland and tied up at the port.

At the first meeting of 1929, Commissioner W. A. Tyler resigned after admitting he had moved his residence to Portland and Sherman Lovell was named to take his place. W. P. O'Brien was elected port president for a two-year term and the two new commissioners, Lovell and Ira Miller, were sworn

in. The port's bonded debt was now \$3,870,000. Commissioners passed a resolution calling for a width of 34 feet on the proposed Skipanon river bridge instead of the 32 feet planned by the Highway Commission. The county fair board was billed for \$450 still owing for the 1923 county fair. The cutter Redwing arrived Jan. 29 under command of Lt. Cmdr. Francis J. Gorman and on Feb. 14 the Algonquin crossed out for the last time and headed for San Pedro.

A giant bridge across the Columbia had been a dream for 50 years but little was done about it until 1929 when the War Department declared it would not oppose such a span. The Portland Chamber of Commerce announced immediately it would oppose construction of a bridge at the mouth of the river. The Astoria Chamber appointed a committee to push construction of the span.

On Feb. 18, the Navy Department sent a check for \$83,000 to Gilpin Construction Co. to compensate for extra work done in removing the rock ledge encountered by the Natoma at Tongue point. That same afternoon, at the urging of the Port of Longview, a bill was introduced in the Washington legislature calling for creation of a state pilot board. Despite very vocal opposition from Astoria's harbormaster, Frank Sweet, the bill passed.

George Sanborn, president of Sanborn-Cutting Co. and a former member of the port commission, died suddenly on Feb. 20 following a stroke. He had been an Astoria resident since 1883.

The annual port report for 1923, released on Feb. 25, showed that 383,213 tons of cargo had been handled during that year, the largest volume since 1924.

A month later, Gov. Roland Hartley of Washington vetoed the bill which would have placed a group of Washington pilots on the bar in opposition to the Oregon pilots.

"It would have created serious trouble," said Frank Sweet.

For the first time since it was established, the port showed a profit for the first three months of the year. It amounted to slightly over \$2,000 and at the suggestion of

Chairman Stone the money was used to redeem two of the outstanding \$1,000 bonds.

Early in April, 1929, three masts were shipped from the port to replace those of Old Ironsides, then tied up in Boston harbor. Engineers testing the water depth of the estuary recovered a dozen axes from the wreck of the Desdemona which had gone to pieces on the middle sands 73 years before. They were still usable.

On April 20, Clackamas Construction Co. was given a contract for construction of a bridge across the Skipanon on a bid of \$14,588 and the ICC announced elimination of the 10% rate differential against Astoria, nullifying Portland's earlier victory. Stockholders of Northwest Pulp and Paper Co. met on May 1 to learn that the management of the company had spent \$258,000 with only a level spot on donated land to show for it. Only \$92 was left in the firm's bank account.

G. Clyde Fulton and Walter Nelson left for Washington later in the month to represent the port before the Interstate Commerce Commission and Bartlett entered a bid of 13 and a half cents a yard for dredging a channel at Ilwaco.

A portent of the national depression due to come in the near future came June 18 when Astoria Savings Bank closed its doors. There had been several runs on the bank during the previous two months.

In the face of increasing financial troubles throughout the country, Astoria Flouring Mills announced on June 29 that the firm was being sold to Pillsbury Co., one of world's largest producers of flour. George L. Campbell was appointed manager of the various Fellman interests and on July 23 the third bay of Pier 3 was leased to Engebretson Seed Co. The commissioners voted permission for use of Pier 3 for the 1929 county fair.

Columbia River Salvage Co. began scrapping the gunboat Concord at Pier 3 on July 25. The aging warship had been moored for years at the quarantine station following participation in the Battle of Manilla Bay. She had finally been

declared surplus by the Federal Health Service. On August 3, the Concord's skeleton was set afire but the teakwood deck planks were saved when workmen discovered the wood did not burn readily.

Port officials signed a contract with the Pillsbury-Astoria Co. on Aug. 6.

Vast losses were incurred on the 9th when frightened investors dumped thousands of shares on the stock market for sale at any price. The receiver of Astoria Savings Bank filed suit against the defunct pulp and paper company to collect unpaid office rent.

A report on Aug. 23 showed that the port had shipped 707 carloads of wheat since the season opened on July 1.

Failure of the Astoria National Bank created a problem for the city of Warrenton where 6% interest payments were due on outstanding bonds. Through the efforts of the bank receiver, the city obtained \$26,370 and managed to pay interest of two per cent. Irate stockholders of the pulp and paper plant met in Oregon City and voted to sue the directors to force them to start building or repay the invested funds.

Exports from the port during November amounted to \$1,761,953 and on Dec. 12 Frank Sweet became acting president of the state pilot board following the death of Capt. William Patterson. Near the end of the year, W. P. O'Brien went to Washington to attempt to change the thinking of congressmen opposed to the Astoria bridge.

The Sanborn-Cutting cannery burned on the night of Jan. 8, 1930, and the ICC removed the \$3 per ton tax which had slowed down freight shipments to Astoria from the east.

On Feb. 11, congress granted \$135,000 for completion of the Skipanon waterway project and the port filed an objection to the use ship's radion in the harbor since it interfered with local radio programming. The Natoma was given the job of dredging Willapa harbor entrance at \$650 a day but lost it following a suit won by Puget Sound Dredging Co. During March, the Pillsbury began grinding whole wheat flour and a special grand jury was appointed

to look into the affairs of the Northwest Pulp & Paper Co. Byron Stone was named a member of the ~~State~~ State Economic Advisory board, and the harbormaster, Frank Sweet, entered the race for mayor of Astoria.

Magnus & Co. purchased \$500,000 of the port's refunding bonds on April 22, paying a premium of \$2,500. The bonds were redeemable in 30 years. Manager Bartlett reported that the bonded debt was now 14% of the district's assessed value since the value had dropped from 50 to 30 million dollars since 1927. Mayor TenBrook won a four to one victory over Frank Sweet at the May primary and voters renominated Sherman Lovell and A. G. Spexarth for commission posts.

A bill passed by congress to permit construction of the Astoria bridge was signed by President Hoover on June 11. Gov. Albin Norblad crossed the river to attend the dedication of the Port of Ilwaco.

On July 22, the commissioners opened bids for installation of diesel engines in the Natoma but rejected them all due to the cost and voted to repair the original steam plant. By the 9th of August, Walter Nelson was able to report that traffic through the port was 10% above the previous year.

At the Aug. 12 meeting, the county fair Board's lease on Pier 3 was cancelled due to the large quantity of wheat stored in the warehouse. G. C. Campbell, receiver of the bankrupt Fellman Furniture Co., offered space for the 1930 fair in that firm's vacant building at the port.

Walter Nelson said the pilots had told him that the south jetty had sunk until only 18 inches of rock was visible at high tide.

The Interstate Commerce Commission announced an impending drop of 3 cents to 8 cents per 100 pounds in wheat shipment rates and wheat traffic almost dried up at the port. Two Portland aviators, Bert Gustin and William Noll told members of the Chamber of Commerce they planned to establish an airport on the tide flats south of Youngs river on the Hess farm.

A grand jury sitting in Portland Indicted Herman Kolberg and H.G. Schundler, promoters of the Northwest Pulp & Paper Co. on charges of embezzlement.

Kolberg was arrested in Portland and Schundler was taken in custody in New York City.

On Oct. 7, the port commissioners offered \$200,000 in refunding bonds for sale and were told by Bartlett that 75 ships had been loaded at the port during September.

William Galvani, mayor of Seaside and chairman of the budget committee, announced on Nov. 12 that the 1931 levy would amount to \$351,050. A sum of \$2,400 had been added for repair of the belt line trestle between the port and the city light plant and \$10,000 had been reserved to pay interest on the bonded debt.

Edgar Smith and L. C. McLeod sold their flour mill stock to the Pillsbury Co. on Nov. 21 and Smith retired from the milling business. McLeod said he would stay on as manager of the mill at the port.

To honor Byron Stone for his long service with the port, his fellow commissioners voted on Dec. 19 to change the name of the dredge tender Natoma to the "B. F. Stone." Frank Sweet reported that there was a bad break in the south jetty and that the "Tillamook chute," the south channel, was silting badly.

Sweet's complaint reached the ears of the Army Engineers and their tug the George H. Mendell showed up on Jan. 6, 1931, to take soundings of the channel. Gov. Norblad asked Gov. Franklin Roosevelt of New York for extradition of H.O. Schundler to face charges in Oregon that he had stolen \$40,000 from the pulp and paper company.

Commissioner E. G. Bates resigned at the Jan. 13 meeting, saying he had moved to Portland and found commuting took up too much of his time. Byron Stone was elected president for two more years.

Frank Sweet's complaint was borne out on Jan. 17 when the steamer Admiral Nulton grounded on the bar and thumped for seven hours before tugs could take her in tow.

Stone told the commissioners that the port was losing the Chinese grain trade to cheaper growers in Canada and Australia. The port's bonded debt was now \$3,670,000, down from a high of \$4,155,000.

Chapter Fourteen

REPUDIATION

After 20 years of trying and the unwinding of untold miles of red tape, Warrenton finally got federal help for the Skipanon waterway project.

On Feb. 11, 1931, the War Department granted \$135,000 to deepen the river channel to 30 feet between the main ship channel and the Prouty sawmill, a distance of 12,000 feet. Bids were to be opened March 12.

The port commissioners stirred up a hornet's nest on Feb. 25 when they voted to establish a harbor line on the south side of Sand island to protect a pier which had been built by Barbey Packing Co. Fishermen attended the March 10 meeting in a body to protest the ordinance and ask for its repeal. They contended that any fixed installation on the south side of the island would interfere with gillnet drifts.

Byron Stone and Frank Sweet took Portland port commissioners on a tour of the lower harbor on Mar. 9 to show them the condition of the south jetty. The following day the Army Engineers admitted that the rock barrier was in bad shape.

Commissioner Convill, also city manager of Westport, said he was new to the job and had gone along with the disputed ordinance without adequate information. On March 21, the commission rescinded the ordinance by a four to one vote with only Byron Stone opposing the move.

On March 13, one-half the Skipanon project was awarded to Oregon Bridge & Dredge Co. on a bid of \$72,036 which worked out to 8.7 cents a yard for the 828,000 yards to be moved.

The Port of Portland endorsed the plea for repair of the south jetty and the Port of Astoria followed suit on April 14. Frank Sweet led Army Engineers on a tour of the jetty on May 8 to show them where the rock barrier had sunk in places to the level of the sea.

The airport runway on the Hess farm had been extended to 1800 feet during the winter and on May 9 pilot Noll returned with a new plane to set up a flying service.

Later in the month a new 200 horsepower engine was installed in the Natoma, boosting her power to that of 1050 horses. The port accepted a contract to work on the channel of the Skipanon, a job which would bring in \$46,500. This prompted Capt. Tenbrook to remark that the former gold dredge had pulled the port through several financial crises and that she had never failed to show a profit.

Congress finally took notice of the Columbia River on May 22 and appropriated \$3,000,000 for improvement of the river jetties. A sum of \$600,000 was to be made available immediately.

On June 20, the Department of Justice filed liens on all property in Clatsop County owned by William A. Tyler, the former port commissioner, who was engaged in the investment business in Portland. The Internal Revenue Service said he owed \$277,356 in back taxes. A warrant was issued for Tyler's arrest but on July 14 his body was found in a canoe floating down the Tualatin River. There was a bullet hole in the head.

Tyler had arrived at Astoria from Colorado in 1915, had owned the Symington department store, and had resigned as president of Astoria National Bank just before that institution closed its doors.

A report filed by the state pilot board for the fiscal year showed that 1941 ships had crossed the bar compared to 2171 the previous year. Further proof of a world depression came on Aug. 18 when Walter Nelson told the commissioners that wheat receipts at the port were down by 90 per cent.

At a riotous commission meeting on Aug. 19, only the objections of Ira Miller and August Spexarth prevented another cut in Bartlett's pay despite his contract. With the Skipanon job almost over, the commissioners fired Capt. TenBrook, cut Nelson's pay from \$350 to \$250 a month, and reduced the pay of the two women clerks from \$150 to \$140. Bartlett said the savings would be \$14,800 annually.

In preparation for bidding on the jetty contract, six firms began combing Clatsop county for sources of rock but found none which met the specifications. Major C. O. Kuentz, district engineer, opened the bids on Aug. 29 and found Columbia Contract Co. was low with a bid of \$1,204,606.19. However the award was not made for several weeks.

The battle over port salaries was resumed at the meeting of Sept. 8. Capt. TenBrook was rehired, this time as caretaker of the Natoma at a salary of \$175 a month, and Nelson's pay was raised to \$275 a month. Bartlett agreed to a cut of \$100 a month while the pay of the two women was not even mentioned. Fishermen again appeared before the commission to ask that the \$3.50 boat storage fee be reduced and that a cut be made in the \$10 charge for use of the boat lift.

Working for the Chamber of Commerce, Clifford Barlow talked the railroad into granting a favorable rate for transporting the jetty rock from Fisher's Landing to Astoria. Dan Kern, president of Columbia Contract, took personal charge of construction of the first leg of the trestle.

The Pillsbury Co., now operating with a crew of 42 and a payroll of \$200,000, filed a complaint with the ICC on Sept. 15 asking for a reduction in the high rate charged for shipping wheat east from Astoria.

The week ending Oct. 3, 1931, was the best experienced by the port in many months with 12 ships loading at the docks. Work was proceeding smoothly at the south jetty under the direction of Foreman Barney Stampey. However, the most serious crisis yet faced by the port commissioners was to become suddenly a reality.

It began Oct. 15 when William Galvani, the bushy haired chairman of the budget committee, told the commissioners that no provision had been made in the 1932 budget to cover tax delinquency. The port was due to redeem \$100,000 in bonds on Jan. 1 and there was only \$70,000 available to meet the payment. Also due was an interest payment of \$96,000. Money grew scarcer on Oct. 20 when the city of Astoria announced it would be unable to meet interest payments on its bonds.

"Now is the time to default if we're going to," Ira Miller told fellow commissioners.

At the meeting of Oct. 27, Wallace Holzman appeared to represent the Cincinnati bondholders and pleaded that the tax delinquency allowance be restored to the budget. Eight firms in the Ohio city held either city or port bonds. On Oct. 31, the city of Astoria defaulted on redemption of \$50,000 in bonds and \$12,295 in interest payments.

The 1932 port budget called for a 12.8 mill levy designed to produce \$284,696.81, a reduction of \$56,880 from the 1931 figure. To complicate matters, four of the county's largest employers, Tidewater Timber Co., Astoria & Southern Railway, Crown Willamette Pulp & Paper Co. and S. P. & S. Railroad, refused to pay the port tax.

On Dec. 22, the port offered bondholders 50 cents on the dollar and offered to pay two and a half per cent interest instead of the six per cent due. This offer was refused angrily as soon as telegrams could be exchanged.

Both the port and the city faced a grim financial future as the year 1932 opened. There were no offers from anyone willing to buy bonds and no financial institution was in a position to loan money.

The commissioners accepted an offer from the Army engineers to lease the Natoma for dredging in the Willamette river but this project was brought to an abrupt halt. On Jan. 5, Albert Seafeldt, as a taxpayer, obtained an injunction which was to prevent the Natoma from working outside the port district. His flimsy excuse was that the dredge might be damaged on the long tow upriver. The commissioners voted to fight Seafeldt through the supreme court, if necessary, and sat back to await action of the bondholders.

Bartlett told commissioners later in the month that he was trying to contact individual bondholders in an attempt to make a deal. He seized 10 dump trucks left in storage on Pier 3 and offered the hoists and engines for sale.

T. C. Whiteside, a bond investigator representing six of the eastern companies, arrived Feb. 5 and on the 29th Morris-Mather Co. filed suit before the Oregon supreme court.

This was an attempt to force the port to pay out interest on bonds on a first come, first served basis. G. C. Fulton filed a counter suit asking that the court split available funds equally among the bondholders.

Terms of Commissioners Stone, Convill and Miller were due to expire Jan. 1 and Miller said he did not intend to run again. Stone remained undecided. At the age of 80, he had spent 16 years on the commission and was ready to retire but hated to quit under pressure. A new candidate was E. M. Cherry, partner in a tugboat firm, who was joined in the race April 1 by Leonard Ryan, a shipping agent and former port employe.

A. J. Fisher, representing lodges and insurance firms which held port bonds, filed two suits against the port, one demanding payment of the interest, the other asking for a pro rata split of the available money. Rufus Holman, Oregon state treasurer, entered the case with a request for an equal division of funds among all of the bondholders. He ~~had~~ had invested state funds in port of Astoria bonds. G. C. Fulton filed a demurser claiming that the state's complaint was faulty.

At the primary election on May 21, Convill, Ryan and Cherry won the three vacant posts on the commission. Aging Byron Stone ran a poor fourth. Left with time on his hands, he leased the Elmore cannery for five months at \$75 a month and prepared to can fish through the season.

In June, the supreme court decided in favor of Seafeldt and issued an injunction preventing the Natoma from working outside the port district. Bartlett got around this by renting the Natoma on a day to day basis and she continued to dig at the mouth of the Clackamas river. Fulton filed notice of appeal.

On Sept. 6, the city of Astoria began accepting its own bonds in payment of street assessments. Sea trade had been almost at a standstill but Walter Nelson told commissioners that prospects looked a little brighter.

The Natoma completed her contract at Gladstone and moved down river to dredge the port slips. The bondholders were quiet for the moment, awaiting a decision by the supreme court in the Morris-Mather suit. It came on Oct. 18

and it was against the bond firm, preventing a host of other suits which might have been filed.

Port expenditures for 1933 were budgeted at \$455,368.60 of which \$292,075 was to be raised by levy. Told that the port owed \$488,112.50 in redemptions and interest, the commissioners cut Nelson's pay from \$3,300 to \$2,880 per year and Frank Sweet's salary from \$300 to \$150 a year. A flat 20% was whacked from TenBrook's pay check. Total savings in this latest economy move amounted to only \$5,855.

Wallace Holzman returned on Oct. 28 to keep an eye on Astoria finances for the bondholders but there would be no action until he reported to committees in Cincinnati and St. Louis. At the meeting of Nov. 8, the port eliminated overtime pay for all regular employes and added \$2,925 to the budget to cover tax delinquencies. This latter move was to ward off additional legal grabs for the port funds.

Morris-Mather Co. reopened its suit for first crack at the port's money on Dec. 10, alleging that there were errors in the supreme court decision. On Dec. 13, the supreme court reversed its decision in the Seafeldt case, permitting the Natoma to work anywhere she could find an employer. The Mather case was thrown out of court on Dec. 31.

With the coming of 1933, the Army Engineers revealed plans to extend the south jetty 9,500 feet westward at a cost of \$1,100,000. A. G. Spexarth was elected port president at the meeting of Jan. 10 with Byron Stone presiding for the last time. The new commissioners, E. M. Cherry and Leonard Ryan were sworn in. The River Improvement Association, an organization of lower Columbia business men, asked the ~~new~~ Reconstruction Finance Corporation for \$6,000,000 to finance a bridge across the Columbia at Astoria.

Walter Nelson reported a general decline in port traffic with outbound cargo almost at the vanishing point. On Jan. 26, an anchor broke loose aboard the Natoma and seriously injured Harold Johnson. A day later, the steamer West Camargo struck the port's dredge near westport, forcing her to return to the port docks for repairs. It was not one of the port's better weeks.

Finances were in poor shape in downtown Astoria and on Feb. 3 the city council proposed to issue scrip. The daily budget issued its own scrip, good for payment for subscriptions and advertising.

At the port meeting of Feb. 14, the Pillsbury Co. asked the port for a reduction in grain handling rates, a move which was tabled pending an auditor's report. At the next meeting, the commission hired W. J. Piepenbrink Co. to audit port finances.

Banks over the country began a three-day holiday on March 2 and Astoria police began accepting items of food in lieu of bail. The state of Oregon went on a warrant basis and an audit of the port books showed \$3,670,000 still outstanding in bonds. The port had skipped an interest payment of \$96,037.50 on July 1 and a similar sum on Jan. 1 and had defaulted on redemption of \$100,000 in bonds.

Commissioners Ryan, Cherry and Spexarth demanded immediate retrenchment at the meeting of March 28 and called for the discharge of either Bartlett or Nelson. They voted finally to let Nelson go, over the protests of Convill and Lovell, and abolished the position of port traffic manager. The rate for handling lumber on the docks was reduced from 25 cents to 12 and a half cents per thousand feet.

On April 1, Guy F. Atkinson Co. of San Francisco was awarded a contract to extend the south jetty on a bid of \$1,686,403.50. Legal beer returned on the 7th but there was little of it available in Astoria with only nine kegs to supply the city for the week.

On April 11, the Oregon supreme court ordered the port to divide available funds equally among the bondholders. The port and the city, both in deep trouble financially, agreed to unite in sending representatives to a bondholders meeting in Chicago. Commissioner Convill was entrusted with the job of making the best deal possible. The March report showed that 9,796 tons of outbound cargo passed through the port during the month, a substantial gain over the previous months.

On May 6, 1933, the frigate Constitution, "Old Ironsides", tied up at Pier 2 and drew 6,500 visitors on the following day.

Frank Sweet and E. M. Cherry formed a mining company to operate mines in central Washington.

President A. G. Spexarth made a vigorous effort to oust TenBrook from the port payroll at the meeting of May 23 but met with little support. He drew sharp comments from the other commissioners when he tried to order that future port meetings be held in his office. The vote was four to one against it.

Also discussed was a plan to issue port scrip and a suggestion to arbitrate with the owners of the West Camargo over \$3,900 damage caused when that vessel collided with the Natoma.

On May 24, the bondholder's committee sued the city of Astoria for immediate payment of interest due and word was received that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation had refused a loan for bridge construction. Walter Nelson took over as secretary of the Astoria Chamber of Commerce.

The port's bid on the Skipanon project was the lowest submitted but no one knew when the Engineers would release the funds. In the meantime, the Natoma was towed hurriedly to Puget island to shore up dikes threatened by the spring flood. Downtown merchants began a move to recall Mayor TenBrook and at the port Bartlett reported that May tonnage had reached 32,663.

Letters which the port manager had sent out to individual bond holders produced a sharp reaction in July. Bartlett had offered a settlement for cash at a figure far short of the face value of the bonds. Members of the committee representatives of the paper sent out a circular advising that no "cheap" settlement should be made. The port requested the county court to donate a site for a county airport in view of the lack of facilities at the Hess farm port.

A meeting of the Astoria bridge committee on July 12 set off a series of vigorous attacks from members of the Portland Chamber of Commerce and the port of Portland. The upriver port let it be known they would never consent to

construction of a bridge across the Columbia below the mouth of the Willamette river. Some Portland port officials claimed a bridge at Astoria would alter the ship channel and others favored opening up the channel along the north bank in order to isolate Astoria. All of these objections and others were brought out at the official bridge hearing on July 22.

Bartlett announced on Aug. 18 that an east coast veneer plant was interested in moving to Astoria and that agents had already looked over the building once occupied by Fellman Furniture Co.

Business was suddenly better all over the country, banks began loaning money again, the stock market went up and the city of Astoria said it would meet the August payroll with cash.

Commissioners at the port believed they could see their way clear but they were not yet out of the woods.

Chapter Fifteen

RECUPERATION

Uptegrove Lumber Co., a New Jersey firm, signed a contract with the Port of Astoria to lease the building once occupied by the Fellman Co. and machinery began to arrive for the new operation on Sept. 3, 1933. The firm cut logs into four-foot lengths for use in the manufacture of veneer.

Commission President Spexarth stirred up a near riot when he ordered the other commissioners to meet in his office rather than at the port. The commissioners outvoted him four to one and Spexarth gave in reluctantly. It is probable that he would have attended a meeting no matter where it was held since he was intent on getting TenBrook off the port payroll. The auditors reported that delinquency in payment of port taxes had reached 63.93 per cent.

The port applied to the Public Works Administration on Sept. 12 for funds to acquire an airport and to finance a mooring basin for trolling vessels. The Atkinson Co. began work on repair of the south jetty and sent a crew to Green mountain to open up a rock quarry.

A committee of bond holders filed suit in Portland on Oct. 2 demanding a judgement of \$348,375 against the port for unpaid interest and overdue bond redemptions. Bartlett pleaded that such a judgement would only increase tax delinquencies and foreclosures in Clatsop county and sent G. Clyde Fulton to Portland to enter a defense.

The port filed an amended request late in October asking \$50,000 in federal funds to construct a 500-berth mooring basin on the west side of Pier 3. On Nov. 15, the Port of Portland voted a formal objection to construction of the Astoria bridge.

Early in December, the Astoria Chamber of Commerce applied to the Department of Commerce for financial aid in purchase of an airport site.

After several inspections, Lt. Basil Smith, airport administrator for the Civil Works Administration, announced a grant of \$31,000 to make the purchase. The 400-acre site was located south of the Lewis and Clark river and west of the road to Seaside. A crew of 165 men, recruited from the camps of the unemployed, began clearing the site immediately, working in two five-hour shifts.

Manager Harold Turlay reported on Dec. 30 that the Uptegrove plant was ready to start production and on Jan. 8, 1934, the first shipment of finished pieces left Astoria.

Word came from San Francisco that A. B. Hammond, builder of the Astoria & Columbia River railroad, founder of Columbia River Packers Association and the Hammond Lumber Co., was dead at the age of 85.

The monthly report for December, 1933, showed that 22,924 tons of cargo had passed through the port during the month and by Jan. 17, 1934, Bartlett was able to tell the commissioners that business was up 32 per cent over the previous year.

The commissioners voted to issue warrants but held them up pending a decision by the courts as to whether they would be legal. The legislature had passed a bill permitting ports to use warrants instead of cash but several groups had challenged the act.

The Calmar Line sent along a check for \$4,535 in payment of damages to the Natoma inflicted in an earlier collision between the dredge and the steamer Flomar.

G. T. McClean, who had been retained as airport engineer, supervised the yarding of logs into six piles at the airport and scheduled the Natoma to provide fill for the runways. The fill was delayed when bonding firms refused to cover the Natoma. Members of the Astoria Chamber of Commerce offered to underwrite the mooring basin in order to obtain a federal grant but the entire project was turned down because it would not provide work for enough men.

The bond holders committee filed suit on March 7 to test the legality of port warrants and on March 13 the federal court decreed a judgement of \$265,000 against the port.

D. E. Bradshaw represented the committee of investors who held port obligations.

The Army Engineers rented the Natoma to dredge the Baker bay channel and downtown business men put up the bond under which the dredge could operate.

On April 24, the port's bonded debt was \$3,607,056 and in addition \$612,441.20 had been overdue since Jan. 1 in interest and redemption payments. No problem would have existed if taxpayers had been able to come up with \$941,614, now listed as delinquent.

Longshoremen began a nationwide strike on May 9 and by the 16th all shipping was paralyzed. Marine engineers joined in the walkout, adding 3000 men to the list of idle. The Astoria Flouring Mills held out until May 21 and then shut down the machinery for lack of wheat. The Public Works Administration cut down on airport funds which reduced the Astoria project to a single runway. May exports at the port amounted to only 3167 tons.

In the midst of all its other troubles, the port suffered a further loss on Aug. 2, 1934, when aging A. G. Spexarth, president of the commission, died of pneumonia. He had suffered several attacks after his 75th birthday and had worked through all of them but now, at the age of 86, he gave up. The commissioners elected E. M. "Ted" Cherry, a tugboat official, to replace him both on the commission and as port president.

On Oct. 18, the federal transportation coordinator declared Portland's grain rate advantage illegal and left it up to the railroads to fix rates. The commission approved a levy of \$175,000 for 1935, not knowing how much of it would be collectable.

An 80-mile wind struck the area on the 22nd, toppling a crane, locomotive and a half mile of track from the jetty into the sea. All power and telephone lines were blown down around the mouth of the river and the lightship Columbia dragged her anchors two miles off station. Eighteen windows were shattered at Tillamook rock lighthouse and the light was extinguished for three days.

Commissioners Cherry and Ryan went to Portland on Oct. 26 and were able to persuade a committee of bondholders to accept a compromise which provided a breathing spell for the port. Under terms of the agreement, the port would turn over \$142,000 to the committee, part of which would apply on the court judgement. The port agreed to levy an annual tax of \$175,000 to redeem bonds and to pay three per cent interest on the outstanding obligations.

B. F. Moore, president of Dixie Baking Co., was elected to the commission at the Nov. 9 election to take the vacancy left by Spexarth's death and Sherman Lovell was re-elected. A sum of \$3,000 was set aside for construction of a storage shed badly needed by Uptegrove Lumber Co.

One sign of a return to business normalcy was the report that 56 ships had loaded cargo at the port during October, taking out 15,332 tons of cargo. The banks began accepting school warrants at face value.

On Dec. 3, heirs of Don Hash, the Natoma deck hand who had drowned more than a year before, sued the port for \$25,000. The commissioners did not take out liability insurance until the following February.

Congress appropriated \$600,000 for ~~repair~~ repair of the south jetty on Dec. 10 and on the following day the Portland Chamber of Commerce reversed itself and voted to favor construction of the Astoria bridge. L. W. Hartman, who had led the fight against the bridge, was no longer president of the Portland business group.

The grand old man of the port, Byron Stone, died Dec. 17 following a sudden illness. He was 86. He was born in New York in 1848 and crossed the plains by ox team to California in 1876. There he became acquainted with George Hume, a cannery operator, and later was persuaded to work for Hume at his Astoria cannery. He had held the position as president of the port for 16 years before he was defeated for reelection.

On Christmas day, 1934, the cutter Redwing was replaced by the Unadaga, transferred from the Great Lakes. Redwing went north to Port Angeles. The commissioners authorized

construction of a 100-foot retaining wall along Portway Ave. at a cost of \$1360 and gave the job to Charles Kohaut. At the first meeting of 1935, R. F. Moore was seated and E. M. Cherry was elected port president.

Word came from Los Angeles on Feb. 1 of the death in that city of Roger Pinneo, the former port traffic manager. Pinneo had gone south from his Seattle home only a few weeks before in search of ~~weak~~ health. He had been ailing and in semi-retirement for several years.

On Feb. 19, Bartlett announced that 80 per cent of the holders of port bonds had now placed them in the hands of the adjustment committee and that no more suits were expected. The first trainload of rock for the new jetty repair project passed through Astoria on Mar. 11.

The port commissioners voted on the following day to accept no more bonds in payment of taxes and so instructed Sheriff Slusher. The lease on space on Pier 3, held by Columbia Iron & Steel Co., was cancelled for non payment of rent.

At the May 14 meeting, the pilot Billy Noll was hired to manage the new airport and Bartlett told commissioners that port bonds were no longer selling for 50 cents on the dollar.

Chester Sprague began logging the airport to make room for five proposed wooden hangars and the commissioners purchased a bus to haul workers between the airport and the camp of unemployed. WPA promised to install lights at the airport when it was completed. Bartlett ruled that wharfage and handling charges must be paid within 30 days.

The port formally signed an agreement with the bondholders on Aug. 13 covering the verbal pact made earlier. Commissioners attended a party early in September marking Mr. and Mrs. Gabriel Wingate's 59th wedding anniversary.

Troll fishermen attended the meeting of Oct. 23 to complain that the proposed basin on the west side of Pier 3 was too exposed to the weather and to suggest that the facility be placed immediately east of the Barbey plant.

As usual for the time of year, a violent storm struck the river entrance in January, ripping away the outer 200 feet of the south jetty. The steamer Iowa struck on Peacock spit at 3 A. M. on Jan. 12 carrying Capt. E. L. Yates and the crew of 34 to the bottom.

By Jan. 20 the storm had subsided and Bartlett reported port traffic 20 per cent above January, 1934. Insurance for port installations was taken out with a number of firms in Astoria. Bartlett approached the city of Warrenton with an offer to buy additional land for the airport but was turned down. Trollers threatened on April 10 to leave for another port if the Astorians did not provide a suitable anchorage. The commissioners approached Barbey on the sub-of purchase of waterfront property but before an answer came the Clatsop county commissioners donated the present basin site to the port. Application for a loan of \$25,000 was made to the Public Works Administration to complete the basin.

The Natoma left July 8 for Longview to begin a three-month dredging job and early in August the port cancelled plans for an air derby to christen the new airport. The promoter hired to put on the show decamped without reporting to commissioners the number of tickets sold.

Funds for the mooring basin were still not available on Sept. 8 when aircraft flew in from all over the state to dedicate Astoria's airport. The event was made a part of the celebration of Astoria's 125th birthday. More than 1200 cachets were sent out bearing the port's insignia and a picture of the Astoria column.

Employes of the Pillsbury flour mill walked out on strike early in the month with demands for higher wages and various other benefits. This tied up 100 carloads of wheat on the port spurs until Sept. 19 when the milling firm began dispatching the cars to other mills.

Talks broke down on Oct. 2 between the flour mill officials and the strikers with preferential hiring as the last point of contention. The 34-day strike finally was settled on Oct. 8 through efforts of the Chamber of

Commerce but the respite was short lived. On Oct. 30, 30,000 maritime workers walked out on strike and the flour mill promptly closed again.

Optimistic Bartlett, believing that the strike would be of short duration, restored wages at the port on Oct. 28 to the level they had reached in 1930.

At the general election on Nov. 4, Commissioners Cherry, Convill and Ryan were reelected.

On Nov. 21, as the maritime strike moved into the fourth week, the Columbia Defense League voted in Portland to press for a naval base at Astoria.

Contract for construction of a mooring basin was awarded on Nov. 25 to Makela Construction Co. Total cost of the basin was estimated at \$40,000 with the port obligated to supply \$17,000 and to use the Natoma at a cost of \$9,000. Federal funds would make up the remainder.

Makela began the basin project on Nov. 27 by removing the Anderson cannery net racks from the proposed site.

The strike of seamen had halted all sea traffic in and out of the river except a few tankers moving in defiance of the walkout. Both river and bar pilots spent their time in the pilot's office waiting for ships that never came. Bartlett told the commissioners it might become necessary to reduce the port staff since the only income was from rentals and from what the Natoma could bring in.

As the new year began, the commissioners elected the same officers who had been in office during 1936 and reported that the port had made a slight profit during the last three months despite the maritime strike.

Operating loss in November was \$339, growing to \$2,710 in December but both losses were offset by a net profit in October of \$4,712.

The 96-day maritime strike ended Feb. 5 with most of the coast ports nearing bankruptcy. Cost of the new airport was now estimated at \$150,000 and the Public Works Administration continued to dole out funds piecemeal. On Mar. 12, the Navy Department turned thumbs down on a naval airport

for Astoria. Engineer McClean supervised the placing of a concrete circle where the two airport runways crossed and a federal inspector objected to tall grass growing on the remainder of the field. Engebretson Seed Co. had been given permission to grow seed grass at the airport and some of it had reached a height of two feet.

Pile bucks at the new mooring basin went on strike on Mar. 25 because Ed and Fred Makela were working on the piledriver. The War Department parted with another \$10,800 for the Skipanon project.

On April 14, the port commissioners authorized payment of \$5,000 to Thompson, Wood & Hoffman, a firm of New York attorneys, for services in handling a new bond issue to replace all of the port's outstanding debts. Four days later, John Sjoli, a port employe, died of lock-jaw which followed a minor injury received on the docks. At Longview, the Natoma's cook fell overboard and was drowned. Ralph Stevens was 45.

The Army Engineers began to coat the outer end of the north jetty with concrete and J.L. Mogenson was given a contract to paint the front of the port office building for \$129.

arrived

When the 3000 new bonds for signatures of the port president and port treasurer, Commissioner Cherry was in the hospital recovering from an operation. Commissioner Ryan planned to take the bonds to Omaha where he would sign them in the presence of the bond holders committee.

By the time he had signed some 300 bonds, Cherry was exhausted and before he could resume another operation became necessary. Commissioner Edward M. Cherry died on July 28 and two days later Bartlett expressed the bonds back to the attorneys for reprinting. At the first meeting in August, R. F. Moore was elected president of the port.

County commissioners finally produced the deed to the basin site but the document was rejected because of a clause which ruled out use of the property for any

other purpose except moorage for small craft. The problem was ironed out at a joint conference and the port finally got its basin free and clear.

On Aug. 13, the Engineers released another \$400,000 for jetty repairs and late in September port grain handlers went on strike for a raise from 70 to 95 cents an hour. They got the raise.

Now that the port's financial problems were almost solved and an airport and mooring basin had become realities, only the naval base remained on the port commissioners want list.

It would take the threat of war to convince high navy brass that Astoria was the logical site.

AVIATION

Although the mooring basin was not yet completed, 106 small craft moved into berths on Oct. 28, 1937. Mooring rates for boats up to 50 feet in length were set at \$15 a year, 75 cents a week or 40 cents a day.

At a special meeting on Dec. 29, the commissioners voted to pay \$54,994 in bond interest and set port expenses at \$172,990 to be paid out of revenue. An agreement was signed with the ILA calling for a 48-hour week and granting a raise from 70 to 85 cents in hourly pay. Rates for handling lumber from barges to shipboard were reduced to 12 and a half cents per thousand feet.

Commissioner R. F. Moore's Dixie bakery burned to the ground on New Years eve and on the 8th of January the Natoma went to the bottom for the second time. Divers went down to salvage the instruments aboard but could find no cause for the sinking.

On Jan. 13, Frank Harris of Seattle was given the job of raising the sunken dredge on a bid of \$33,500. If he failed, he was to get nothing. This time she was in 40 feet of water off Pier 1.

Harris brought the Natoma to the surface on Mar. 2 but it was ten days before workmen were able to flush 200 tons of mud from the engine room and start her toward drydock in Portland. Salvage of the Natoma and completion of the mooring basin left the port some \$65,000 in the hole.

Lt. Cmdr. N. M. Nelson set his Grumman amphibian down at the port docks on Apr. 4, 1938, to take up station there on a trial basis.

Shock of the loss of his bakery and worry over port affairs claimed the life of the port president, Robert F. "Dixie" Moore, on May 16. He was 52 years old and had been operating the Dixie Baking Co. in Astoria since 1918.

With only two days remaining before the primary election, Mark J. Johnson, a Lewis and Clark valley dairyman,

filed as a writein candidate for the port commission. Other aspirants were Edward Thompson and Axel Jacobsen. Johnson won easily.

On July 13, the commissioners sampled the first peas canned on Pier 3 by J.B. Burk Co., a Walla Walla firm which had leased space for a small cannery. Capt. N. G. Granville was named to replace Frank Sweet on the state pilot board since Sweet did not have ship master's papers as required by law.

In October, the 1939 port budget was set at \$373,186. The Army Engineers decided to dredge a channel up Youngs bay and the Natoma got the job on a bid of \$34,000. On Oct. 31, the Coast Guard assigned a permanent air maintenance crew at the airport. The Engineers released \$25,000 for extension of the Warrenton basin.

Port commissioners threatened on Nov. 23 to sue truck drivers who were cutting deep ruts in the airport runways while hauling material for dikes. They voted to close the port office on Saturday afternoons.

The Burk Co. plagued by a poor pea-growing season, filed bankruptcy papers on Dec. 20 and Bartlett padlocked the doors to protect the port-owned canning machinery.

First act of the commission as 1940 began was the drafting of a resolution to the war Department asking for the return of the dredge Chinook to the river. Frank Sweet said the 500-foot vessel could work on the bar when smaller dredges would be forced to come inside. In Portland, Dr. Alfred Kinney celebrated his 89th birthday.

Bartlett reported in February that the Natoma had earned \$20,000 in a five-week period and that a bill then before congress would provide \$1,500,000 for completion of the Tongue point naval base. He said attitudes of high navy officers toward the project were changing.

On Feb. 27, Astoria Chinese threw up a picket line around the freighter Norway Maru at Pier 2 where the vessel was scheduled to load 21 carloads of scrap iron destined for Japan. Longshoremen refused to cross the picket line,

made up of Chinese women and children. After seven days, Frank Sweet, acting without pay as harbor master, ordered the pickets off the docks for creating a "nuisance." That night, the port commissioners voted to handle no more scrap shipments, drawing an immediate protest from the Japanese consul in Portland.

On March 27, the Waterfront Employers Association filed suit in Portland district court for \$37,000 damages alleged to have been caused by the port's conniving with the Chinese. Attorney G. C. Fulton filed an answer on April 20 claiming the association was not incorporated and therefore had no standing in court. The case dragged through postponement after postponement while attorneys for the Association quizzed port commissioners and members of the Chinese colony. There was much oratory about the right to free speech and the Cino-Japanese war. The attorneys even examined school records to see which of the Chinese children did not attend school on days the Norway Maru was picketed. The Association offered in July to withdraw its suit if the port would remove the ban on handling scrap metal.

Finally, on Oct. 28, District Judge Claude McCulloch dismissed the case against the port but still held the Chinese for trial.

The port handled 18,000 tons of cargo in April and the auditor's report showed that combined activities made a profit of \$47,850 in 1938 compared to a loss of \$4,415 in 1937.

Makela Construction Co. got the contract to remove an old county finger pier at Tongue point on a bid of \$86,000 and on Aug. 31, Admiral E. B. Fenner dedicated a naval air station at the point. Lt. W. A. Zobel took charge of construction for the navy.

A new state law forced the commissioners to look for a steel oil barge to replace the wooden vessel being used to supply the Natoma. The 1940 port levy was raised \$25,000, the money to be applied on bond redemption, and the total expense for the year was projected at \$308,296.60. Natoma was leased to Tacoma Dredge Co. for work at the naval base on a contract expected to bring the port \$110,000.

Billy Noll resigned as manager of the airport and the

commissioners debated closing the facility since no funds were available to pay a manager or caretaker. The Astoria Flying Club, led by Leo Arany, offered to take over the field, now officially "Clatsop Airport," by action of the board, and applied for federal funds to keep it in operation.

With the coming of 1940, Uptegrove Lumber Co. and the Pillsbury flour mill were forced to close due to a shortage of ships. The flying club leased Clatsop airport and a report from the auditors revealed that 1939 had been the second best year in the port's history. Max Lehman, a Salt Lake City cannery operator, leased the former Burk cannery on Feb. 22 and prepared to can peas when the season opened.

Fishermen complained that the new mooring basin was subject to surges and asked the commissioners to do something about it. Port traffic dropped to 7,040 tons in February and Commissioner Lovell went to San Francisco to stir up some coastal trade.

When the Navy announced in April it planned to double the size of the plans for the Tongue point base, the port put in a strong bid to the Coast Guard to take over Clatsop airport. The Natoma was signed to dredge Umpqua harbor on a low bid of \$178,000 and commissioners voted to expand the mooring basin eastward. This would make necessary the removal of a rotting pier and the removal of an old warehouse to the shore. Fire wiped out the Regatta pavillion two days before the annual celebration was scheduled to open.

Lt. Cmdr. Higbee of the Onandaga was named port captain only to be replaced a month later by Lt. Cmdr. James Hirshfield. A marine detachment arrived from Seattle and took over guard duty at Tongue point.

Commissioner James Convill resigned from the port commission and as mayor of Astoria to accept an army commission. Before leaving, he approved the 1941 port budget which called for expenditure of \$401,250. Port tonnage rose sharply during September as more vessels ventured to

cross through the European war zone.

A crew of 500 men began construction at the naval air base on Nov. 2, 1940, and Lt. Cmdr. M.P. Jensen arrived to establish a Coast Guard base. This was to be set up at the Yacht Club location on Youngs river. Lt. Cmdr. George Hasselman took command at Tongue point and planned to dedicate the air station on Dec. 15. On Dec. 12, congress authorized \$270,000 for improvement of Clatsop airport.

At the first port meeting of 1941, held on Jan. 15, Sherman Lovell was elected commission president and the new member, William McGregor, Jr., was seated as secretary. In Portland, Albina Engine & Machine Works launched an 80-foot oil barge to supply the Natoma.

On Jan. 29, the allotment for Clatsop airport was raised to \$411,536. President Franklin Roosevelt asked congress for \$2,500,000 to develop Tongue point naval base and got \$465,878 from the Works Progress Administration.

The Oregon legislature passed a measure on Feb. 25 which permitted the port to sell a bond refunding issue and G. C. Fulton filed condemnation proceedings against owners who held 27 lots in the center of Clatsop airport.

A visit which was to have far reaching consequences began on March 3 when representatives of Reynolds Aluminum Co. arrived to look for a plant site at Warrenton or Astoria.

The money-hungry port commissioners offered on March 12 to lease the east side of Pier 2 to the Navy at a rental of \$2,500 a month. The west side of the pier, which never had been completed, was offered to a shipbuilding firm for \$600 a month. The Navy heard of this offer and weeks later, after emitting hour after hour of seafaring language, signed a lease for the half pier at \$1,100 a month.

The port offered to receive bids on a \$500,000 bond refunding issue but when the bids were opened on May 23 there was only one bidder, the State Bond Commission. Although the port still owed \$3,163,000, the bid was turned down. Bartlett erected a tall steel fence across the base of all three piers and installed flood lights to discourage

pilfering.

By the end of May there were three runways at the airport and WPA crews began coating them with gravel. Several hundred unemployed men from Camp Clatsop supplied the work force. Under a new state law, the port's fiscal year had been changed to start on July 1.

The budget for the first six months of 1942 was set at \$200,925 and the levy was raised one mill so that \$25,000 could be applied on the bonded debt.

A naval detachment occupied the east side of Pier 2 on Sept. 22, 1941, and it was dedicated that day as a naval base. Max Lehman surrendered his cannery lease on Pier 3.

While working at Garibaldi, the Natoma sank for the third time in a little over six feet of water.

The First National Bank of Portland purchased \$2,700,000 of the port's refunding bonds at par on Nov 27, saving the port \$206,000 in interest payments.

War was declared on Japan on Dec. 8 and blackouts began that night in Astoria. Lt. Cmdr. Jensen was named port captain and immediately ordered fishing halted in the lower estuary and on the day before Christmas Congress appropriated \$59,500 for paving the Clatsop airport runways.

The port stopped paying interest on its old bond issue on Jan. 1, 1942, and by the 14th of January \$3,118,000 of the issue had been redeemed. The auditor reported that only six ships had called at the port in December. The treasurer, William McGregor, purchased \$50,000 worth of defense bonds and reported that only \$214,000 of the port's bonds remained unredeemed.

A 4400-foot runway was completed at Clatsop airport on Feb. 27 and a week later the Navy closed the waterfront between sunset and sunrise. McGregor was named Astoria first citizen of the year.

Bartlett reported to commissioners on April 28 that for the first time in history no ships had called at the port during the month of March. Warren Northwest Co. was given a contract to pave the airport runways on a bid of \$80,000 after WPA announced a grant of \$217,000 to complete the

facility. Owners of the condemned lots at the airport were awarded a total of only \$100. On June 24, the Maritime Commission requisitioned the Natoma's tender, the B. F. Stone, for duty along the waterfront and General Petroleum Co. submitted a bill for \$5,777 to cover the cost of laying new pipe around Pier 2.

The Navy acquired 25 more acres at the airport in August and contracted for an additional 250 feet of Pier 2. Edward Thompson, president of Columbia River Packers Association, was named to replace Commissioner Convill who was now an army lieutenant colonel. Navy patrol aircraft began operating from the Tongue point runway and the Coast Guard sent a small fire boat from Seattle to guard the Astoria waterfront.

Navy construction men wasted no time in erecting bachelor officers quarters at the port and on Feb. 23, 1943, Capt. J. D. Barner took command of the navy detachment at Pier 2. At the meeting that night, commissioners signed a five-year lease with Uptegrove Lumber Co. and six packing firms requested more berthing space for small boats. On Mar. 10, WPA granted \$250,000 for extension of runways at Clatsop airport. Joseph Reed, a carpenter, was killed in a fall at the airport.

Although the mooring basin now had space for 200 boats, the fishermen requested moorage for additional boats and on June 10 the commissioners voted \$30,000 to expand the basin. Bartlett said he would look at another site in Uppertown.

Lt. A. H. "Jess" Wright, who had been commissioned in January, 1942, was named port captain and the port's long time attorney, George Clyde Fult on, died at the age of 83. Born in Iowa in 1860, he had practiced law in Astoria since 1915.

The Navy took over part of Pier 1 and all of Piers 2 and 3 in June to establish an outfitting yard for the baby aircraft carriers which were being launched at Vancouver and Portland. By the end of June, the port's bonded debt had been reduced to \$2,536,000 and a budget of \$140,700 had been approved for 1944. The levy was cut to \$150,000.

The latter half of 1943 was marked by the passing of three men who had been influential in the building of the port.

Frank Sweet, who had been a member of the port commission between 1915 and 1938, died June 25 aboard a ship on the way down river from Portland. He was 56 years old. Dr. Alfred Coleman Kinney, one of Astoria's greatest boosters, died in Portland following a stroke at the age of 93. Former port commissioner Emory Prouty, died at the age of 59 at Winlock, Wash. He had been elected to the commission in 1921.

The Navy allotted \$253,000 on July 12 to widen runways at Clatsop airport and flew in several squadrons of Grumman aircraft to train fighter pilots. A week later, the port commissioners voted \$20,000 to cover the cost of new floats at the mooring basin and another \$11,000 to install protective sheet piling. The Navy returned the tender B. F. Stone after turning down the port's offer to sell the vessel for \$14,000. She had been bringing in rental of \$500 a month. Columbia Boat Building Co. launched a new steel hull in which the port proposed to install the Stone's 300-horse-power Atlas engine.

On Sept. 30, the Navy started construction of a new hospital on a 65-acre tract south of Astoria. Congress authorized establishment of a permanent naval base at Astoria on Oct. 12 and with the turning of the tide in the war overseas, blackouts ended on Oct. 28.

The Navy signed a lease on Jan. 12, 1944, which took in all of the Port of Astoria property except the Pillsbury flour mill and the small boat basin. To date, the basin had cost the port \$123,000. Mooring fees at the basin were reduced by \$10 at the request of fishermen.

There were 116 small boats in the basin paying \$30 a year, 110 paying \$50, and 29 contributing \$70 annually. Port expenses for the year were budgeted at \$11,720 with an estimated income of \$12,500.

Following the navy takeover, a blanket of secrecy descended over the port and the commissioners were forced

to rely on dispatches from Washington for information of the Navy's activities.

In this way they learned of the establishment of a 100-man laundry on Pier 2, a grant of \$410,000 for rebuilding Pier 2, and an allocation of \$853,000 for construction of new hangars at the airport. Capt. J. D. Barner was relieved of command at the port navy base and went east to take command of a new aircraft carrier, the Shangrila.

The commissioners sent to congressmen a request for a survey of the proposed Uppertown mooring basin and Gilpin Construction Co. leaked the information that it had a contract to rebuild Pier 2 at a cost of \$225,000.

The Navy announced an appropriation of \$250,000 for rebuilding the road to its new hospital and at the primary election McGregor and Anderson were reelected to the port commission.

Another former port commissioner, Clifford Barlow, died May 22 while serving as police judge and auditor for the city of Warrenton. Born in England in 1883, he had come to Oregon in 1900 and had worked for years to establish a seaport at Warrenton.

Lt. Cmdr. John Beck was promoted to captain and Capt. Arthur Ponto took over command of Astoria naval station.

On Aug. 3, 1944, the commissioners signed an amended lease which turned Clatsop airport over to the Navy but gave the port the right to establish an industrial park in the area.

With no airport to worry about and no port docks to manage, members of the port commission settled back to await the outcome of the war. The Navy was in command.

Chapter Seventeen

STAGNATION

By Sept. 27, 1944, the Navy had trained 2000 officers and 26,000 sailors to man the baby flattops and transports which had been launched at Portland and Vancouver shipyards. Many of these vessels were outfitted at the Port of Astoria.

The Civil Aviation Authority held a hearing in October on United Airline's request to provide service to Clatsop airport and in Salem the state treasurer announced that the port had reduced its bonded debt by \$500,000 during the previous two years.

While the city on the southern harbor was changing its name from Marshfield to Coos Bay, the Natoma was earning a fee of \$60,000 for dredging the bay entrance and, as the year ended, the CAA granted \$304,000 for improvement of Clatsop airport.

The Navy broke its wartime silence as 1945 began and announced that Astoria Marine Construction Co. had worked on 50 escort carriers and 66 AP5 transports at the port docks during the war.

Charles C. Thompson, 63, manager of the port's mooring basin since its opening, died on May 14 after having worked for the port for 14 years. He was replaced by R. H. Hansen. The Clatsop county industrial commission produced plans for an enlarged mooring basin at Uppertown and presented them at a hearing held by the Army Engineers on May 19.

On June 12, Columbia boat yard launched the 65-foot twin screw tug, the Sherman W. Lovell, for the port. She was powered by twin 165-horsepower Murphy diesels. By June 13, the port's debt had been reduced another \$88,000 and on that day three Navy leases were renewed which called for \$199,000 rental for the coming year.

Former port commissioner James Convill returned from the war wearing a bronze star pinned on his blouse by Gen. George Patton, and resumed his post as city manager of Astoria.

The city council set his pay at \$450 a month. From Washington came word that the Tongue Point Naval Station already had cost the government \$20,000,000.

Strong & McDonald of Tacoma got the job of adding 70,000 tons of rock to the north jetty on a bid of \$294,000 and Navy frogmen exploded 18 of the mines which had guarded the lower estuary.

The Natoma was tied up Oct. 30 after five years of constant operation and eight members of her crew began making minor repairs in expectation of another government contract.

The Navy announced in November that a reserve fleet would be stored in the Astoria, over the objections of Seattle and Tacoma officials, and officers arrived to inspect Youngs bay as a possible site. Col. Ralph Tudor, district engineer, called a second hearing on the proposed new mooring basin.

The port upped its rates on Nov. 14 from 48 to 65 cents for handling wheat and boosted the unloading charge from 11 to 18 cents. Bartlett suggested that the port should look for a private operator to take over the grain elevator and told the commissioners that the port had been losing money at the old rates. He expressed concern over the cost of dredging the west mooring basin which was taking \$10,000 of the port's funds every two years. Capt. TenBrook said the Natoma could not handle the job due to the floats.

The Navy warned not to expect early return of the port docks to control of the commission at a November meeting and Treasurer McGregor reported that he had invested \$17,000 in victory bonds. The bond redemption fund had grown to \$197,000.

On Dec. 21, the Maritime Administration selected Cathlamet bay for its fleet anchorage and christened it Mott basin in honor of Representative James Mott who had passed away a month before. Another name came into being on Jan. 2, 1946, when the base at Tongue point was named officially United States Naval Station, Tongue Point. The Natoma completed removal of a shoal which had formed across the slip entrances and was towed to anchorage above Youngs bay bridge.

A. H. "Jess" Wright was named port harbor harbor-master in February, replacing Frank Sweet, and the Army Engineers began work on a \$348,000 project to improve the Warrenton basin. The Natoma was towed hurriedly up-river to dredge at Mott basin where \$755,000 had been allotted for deepening the channel. The basin was dedicated at a ceremony on April 24, 1946. Sherman Lovell and Mark Johnson filed to succeed themselves and a new candidate, Joseph Dyer, president of AMCCO, filed his intention to run for the port commission. Capt. TenBrook suggested that it might be time to retire the Natoma since her boilers were in need of replacement at a cost of \$25,000 and work stoppages were becoming costly since the pay of the 14 crew members went on while she was out of service.

On April 18, congress granted \$1,044,000 for construction of the Uppertown basin and a week later the naval authorities announced that Clatsop airport soon would become surplus and the Coast Guard decided to give up the Yacht club building it had held during the war.

West Coast Airlines leased office space at the airport on Aug. 8 and prepared to start regular service to Astoria in October. Ed Parsons, a radio technician, was named airport manager. Threatened by the port with a suit, Bioproducts, Inc., vacated its rented building, leaving behind an odor of dead fish.

Two sections of Pier 3 were released by the Navy on Aug. 14 for storage of canned fish and at the airport five buildings were declared surplus. Capt. A. O. Rule, officer in charge of 13th District naval airports, told commissioners they could have wooden hangar No. 8. At the same time he laid off civilian firemen at the airport due to lack of funds. The Natoma's crew was cut from 11 to four, reducing the \$4,000 a month payroll.

Construction of 375 housing units near the naval base was authorized from Washington and on Oct. 18 the first four ships arrived for anchorage in Mott basin.

Maritime unions walked out on a 26-day strike which

which tied up six ships at the port through September. With no traffic across the river entrance, Army Engineers were able to remove the last 25 underwater mines which had guarded the harbor during the war.

Congress appropriated another \$438,985 on Oct. 23 for construction and dredging at Mott basin and the port commissioners asked the Navy to return more buildings at the airport for rental to civilian tenants. Kambeay Flight Service leased the airport parachute loft and George Amato took over the lounge on Nov. 13. Coast Distributing Co. leased a building at the port docks for \$60 a month. The strike begun by marine engineers was followed by a walk-out of longshoremen which did not end until Nov. 18. Shipping had been idle for 54 days.

The Navy kept a tight grip on the port docks, leaving only the face of Pier 1 open for commercial shipping. Silting had reduced the water depth to 26 feet along the face, a condition attributed by pilots to piling which had been driven to protect the mooring basin. By Nov. 20, there were 66 surplus vessels anchored in Mott basin.

The first commercial flight took off from Clatsop airport on Dec. 4, 1946, and on the 18th the first commercial vessel in three years began loading on the west side of Pier 1. The schooner Coastal Monarch took on a cargo of flour. The Navy surrendered Piers 1 and 3 to the port that afternoon but held on to Pier 2. Two fire trucks at the airport were declared surplus and donated to the port of Astoria.

As the year ended, President Harry Truman announced the official end of hostilities, the Navy began vacating its hospital on Youngs river, and 430 men were working at the naval housing area to be known later as Navy Heights.

At the port meeting of Jan. 14, 1947, commissioners were shocked to receive the resignation of Robert Rennelaer Bartlett, the engineer who had guided the port's destiny for 33 years. After an illness of several months, he had decided to step down Feb. 1.

Joseph Dyer and George Gray, a Seaside lumberman, who had been elected to the commission, were seated at the same session and William McGregor was elected president. The commission met in its newly vacated offices on Pier 1.

James Bowler, office manager and part time assistant manager, told commissioners the Natoma had lost \$37,000 during operations for the year ending June 30, 1946, and that the port's debt had been reduced to \$2,034,000.

On Bartlett's recommendation, Bowler was appointed general manager of the port at the next meeting and immediately advised the redemption of \$8,000 in bonds held by the state of Oregon. Apparently shocked by the loss in dredge operation, Commissioner Gray made a motion to sell the Natoma but received no support from the others.

Cmdr. Allan Fulmer took over command of Mott basin on Feb. 24 and reported the arrival of a floating drydock which would be used in repair of the surplus ships.

Douglas Nelson, well known Astoria aviator, was named manager of Clatsop airport on Dec. 26 and said he planned to hold rededication ceremonies in March. His pay was set at \$300 a month. Frank Ratton, retired banker and former port commissioner, died March 4 at the age of 86.

The airport, which had cost the Navy \$4,500,000 during development of its 8/0 acres during wartime, was busy for a time with aircraft operated by five flight schools but in mid March the Rambeau school went bankrupt.

Capt. Colin Campbell took over command of Tongue Point Naval Station from Capt. Ligon Ard and on April 25 watched completion of the eighth and last pier at the station.

A newly formed naval reserve group asked the port for free use of the deserted recreation hall on Pier 2 but the commissioners countered with an offer to lease the building for \$60 a month. The Navy's lease of Pier 2 expired on July 1 but the personnel manning three fire boats and two fire trucks remained at the docks. Port officials noted that the rent for Pier 2 was six months

in arrears.

Douglas Nelson was called back to active duty with the Air Force on July 1 and management of the airport was taken over by Col. Victor Nunenkamp, another aviator. He announced that the facility was barely breaking even. On July 23, the Navy returned 15 ~~mix~~ buildings at the airport to control of the commission.

After almost three years of occupation, the Navy finally surrendered the port docks on July 25. The first commercial vessel to tie up at Pier 2 since the outbreak of the war, the Greek freighter George D. Gartsos took aboard a cargo of lumber. Back at her Pier 1 station, the Natoma dredged up thousands of tin cans, pieces of Japanese weapons and other metal objects which had been tossed overboard by returning military personnel.

On July 28, congress passed a Rivers and Harbors bill which provided \$500,000 for development of the proposed mooring basin in Uppertown. The Army Engineers were forced to alter plans to make the best use of the available money, about half of what was needed. The six sewers which flowed into the site posed an added problem. On Aug. 26, command of the surplus ship basin was turned over to Capt. Campbell with headquarters at the naval station.

Two days later, the Army Engineers unexpectedly made available \$3,000,000 for development of the surplus ship anchorage and officers from 13th Naval District headquarters arrived to take a second look at Youngs bay. Workmen went on strike at the Pillsbury flour mill for higher wages, a strike which was to last five weeks and only a six-cent per hour raise.

The Youngs bay site finally was rejected as an anchorage for Maritime Administration ships and on Sept. 8 workmen began driving test piling in Cathlamet bay. Construction was scheduled to start before Jan. 1 in order to take advantage of the federal grant. Mott basin now contained 426 surplus ships and carpenters reported that the housing units at Navy Heights were almost done.

At the port meeting of Oct. 15, Bartlett and TenBrook, both of whom had been retained as advisors at \$200 a month each, were dropped from the payroll, effective Oct. 31. The dredge superintendent's son, Lawrence TenBrook, was hired to operate the Natoma, the only piece of port property producing a profit. Pay for the new dredge captain was set at \$500 a month.

On Nov. 17, the inbound freighter Loyola Victory wiped out the army pier at Ft. Stevens while proceeding in a thick fog but the captain did not report the crash until the vessel reached Portland. On the 26th, port officials asked R. E. Hickson, assistant district engineer, to plan a wider roadway atop the east basin breakwater. The commissioners wanted 45 feet instead of the proposed 20 feet. Eventually they got a width of 30 feet.

As 1947 drew to a close, West Coast Airline cut its service to Astoria to two flights a day from the original four, the War Assets Administration placed the navy hospital on the auction block, and the Natoma went to Yaquina bay on a contract which was to bring in \$163,125.

At the first port meeting of 1948 on Jan. 13, commissioners were told that the Army Engineers had released \$1,429,000 for construction of the east basin. The auditors reported that the airport had made a profit of \$1,304.83 during its first year of civilian operation. By that time, 314 families had moved into Navy Heights where 568 units had been completed.

Scheduled for the scrap heap, the 10,000-ton former hospital ship Refuge sank while moored at the face of Pier 1. She was refloated three days later with the aid of 15 pumps supplied by the Coast Guard.

The Navy requested on Mar. 24 that the port lease Clatsop airport on a part time basis for use as a gunnery school at a rental of \$1,500 a month. The port commissioners agreed eagerly since funds were running short.

Backed by high Navy officials, the Washington delegation in congress filed a formal protest against

storage of surplus ships in the Columbia river. However, the project continued with a projected cost of \$2,500,000. At Yaquina bay, the port suffered a loss of 100,000 gallons of oil destined for use of the Natoma when a cement-hulled surplus vessel used as a tanker sank after striking rocks on the shoreline.

Flood water in the Willamette river closed the Portland docks, forcing 11 ships to unload Portland-bound cargo at the Astoria piers where Pier 2 was buried under stored goods. James Bowler reported that the port was eight years ahead of its schedule in bond redemption. The 1949 budget was set at \$371,312.

Congress released \$778,000 on June 14 for completion of the protective breakwater at the east basin. Plans called for the steel mole to extend 2400 feet parallel to the shore.

The former superintendent of the Natoma, John Conrad TenBrook, died July 7 after several month of illness. He had reached the age of '74. He was born in 1874 at Lakeview, Oregon, and from 1893 to 1908 had superintended construction of both north and south jetties at the mouth of the river. He settled in Astoria in 1917, served as mayor of the city from 1927 to 1939, and was in command of the dredge for 20 years prior to his retirement.

Workmen at the Pillsbury mill struck again on Aug. 2, seeking a 20-cent addition to the hourly wage of \$1.29. The port entered the lowest bid for dredging the reserve fleet basin but the project was split into four segments and only two were reserved for the Natoma. The port's share of the contract was to yield \$731,880. West Coast longshoremen went on strike Sept. 1 and 222 ships were reported strike-bound in coastal ports.

Death claimed William Leonard Thompson, 69, former port commissioner and former president of Columbia River Packers Association, on Sept. 12, 1948. The Pillsbury strike was settled on the 8th of November.

New boilers were installed in the aging Natoma early in the month but the dredge remained idle for a time

awaiting arrival of a new turbine. On Nov. 12, east coast longshoremen joined in the strike and two weeks later they were backed up by a walkout of marine engineers. Ships at every port in the country remained inshore.

Another \$139,000 was released for construction of the east basin on Jan. 11, 1949, and at the first port meeting of the new year, held the following day, George Gray was elected president. Chester W. Laughlin, who had retired from the dairy business after 27 years, replaced retiring J. W. Anderson as a member of the commission. Former port commissioner James Convill resigned as Astoria city manager to accept a similar post at Corvallis. Up to that date, construction of Clatsop airport had cost various federal agencies a total of \$5,000,000.

The Civial Aeronautics Administration provided \$15,000 for repairs to the airport runways on April 23 and the cost of the new east basin was estimated at \$1,414,000. The port budget for 1950 was upped \$42,967 to a total of \$414,280.

On July 14, the port signed a three-way agreement with Fillsbury mill and Pacific Northwest Grain Growers Associations calling for exclusive shipment of their products through the port of Astoria. Grain handling equipment which had not been used since World War 1 was taken out of storage and channel 32 feet deep was dredged along Pier 1 to receive ships expected to load grain.

Mark Julius Johnson, 67, port commissioner from 1939 to 1947, died July 11. Born May 18, 1882 at Oland, Sweden, he had come to the United States in 1899.

Eleven ships loaded at the port docks during the week ending the 11th and a week later the first three carloads of wheat arrived from east of the mountains. By July 27, 60 carloads had reached the docks and a million more bushels was scheduled to arrive. Pier 1 was full and Pier 3 was filling as rapidly as workmen could construct bulkheads.

The first vessel scheduled to load grain, the P & T Explorer, was not due to dock until Aug. 19. but a new problem was to appear before the vessel's arrival.

CONCLUSION

For once, the port of Astoria had too much wheat.

While Chairman George Gray was in Chicago promising shippers they would get all the storage room they needed, the other commissioners took a look at the wheat-packed piers and refused to accept any more carloads.

Gray hurried home and called a special meeting during which he managed to convince the others that storage of wheat would be more profitable in the long run rather than to hold the space for canned salmon.

The Natoma, clanking away in the reserve ship basin, was bringing up 20,000 cubic yards of silt a day, that is until Dec. 1 when the ancient cutting head gave out. The new one cost \$11,500. She was not to complete removal of 6,000,000 yards of material until May, 1950.

Driving of wing piles at the east basin was completed on Dec. 22, 1949, under the direction of Foreman Don Shupp, ending activity for the year at the new facility.

On Jan. 1, 1950, the port paid \$6,000 interest and retired \$85,000 in bonds, reducing the debt to \$1,620,000. Pillsbury flour mill laid off half the crew in February and in March the commissioners voted to pay 20 per cent of the cost of a plank roadway at the east basin. Claims filed with the Navy for war damage at Clatsop airport finally netted the port \$3,750.

At 1 P.M. on April 18, 1950, piling 3240 was driven at the east basin, completing the breakwater. H. G. Palmberg got the contract to install walkways and floats at the basin on a bid of \$84,068 and the budget for 1951 was set at \$499,330. John Helstrom joined Palmberg in erecting the roadway out to the breakwater,

In August, the commissioners took a good long look at Clatsop airport which had earned \$500 during the last year of Navy control but had lost money steadily since that time. Beginning of the war in Korea brought tighter security measures to the waterfront since residents were

afraid that some foreign vessel might smuggle in an atom bomb.

The Corps of Engineers granted \$154,600 for improvement of the Warrenton basin on Sept. 20 and then found that the war had frozen all appropriations not directly connected with the war effort.

The grand old man of the port's development, Robert Ken-neslaer Bartlett, died Sept. 26, 1950, after an illness of only one day. He had covered a lot of ground since his birth in 1876 in Carbondale, Penn. He had served as port manager from 1916 to 1947.

A few fishermen tried out the new east basin in October and stormed into the port meeting of Oct. 11 to curse the engineers for their stupidity in planning the basin. Heavy swells raced in through the western entrance, they said, and made a safe anchorage for small boats impossible. The Corps was to hold a public hearing on the problem 23 years later during which grandiose plans were presented but as of 1974 no action had been taken.

Finances again troubled the commissioners when they heard the auditor's report of Nov. 15, 1950. Clatsop airport had chalked up a loss of \$37,809.85 during the first three months of the fiscal year. The Natoma had earned \$2,138 against operating costs of \$19,686 and \$16,725 was owing on the east basin roadway. In addition, 400 people had signed a petition demanding repair of the west basin which had deteriorated badly.

Although the commissioners had hoped to hold down costs, they signed a contract to repair the west basin on a bid of \$35,271.

Cmdr. Quentin Greeley arrived on Jan 13, 1951, to take command of port security and ordered passes issued to workers along the waterfront. Nervous guards at the naval station fired in the direction of boats which came to close. There was a tenseness around the port which was not compensated by lucrative Navy contracts as it had been during World War II. General Manager Bowler reported that 21,500 tons of wheat had been shipped from the port during the first 23 days of the new year.

To add to the port's troubles, Victor Nunnenkamp was recalled to active duty with the Air Force, leaving Clatsop airport without a manager. It was days later before the commissioners decided to give the job to James McDonald who had been operating a flying service at the airport.

By April 14, 30 carloads of wheat were arriving daily at the port and much of it moved out immediately in ships bound for India.

The terms of Joseph Dyer and George Gray expired Jan. 1, 1951, and their places were taken by Herbert Hacker, an oil distributor, and William Manion, Seaside real estate operator. The 1951 port budget was set at \$473,290 and Bowler reported that the bonded debt was \$1,590,000 as of May 22.

During the next ten years, port commissioners came and went at the whim of the voters. There was little of an eventful nature along the waterfront except for the placing in commission of 91 reserve naval vessels from the reserve fleet at Tongue Point and their departure to join the Korean war effort. One important change was that of management at the port.

James Bowler, general manager for the previous seven and a half years, submitted his resignation in March, 1950, to take effect at the end of the year.

Talks begun the previous year by Commissioner Wright resulted on Jan 27, 1954, in a contract between the port and A. C. Allyn Bond Co. of Chicago to make a feasibility study of the proposed Astoria bridge.

It took the commissioners until May 13, 1955, to decide that the assistant manager, Richard Bettendorf, was the man to take over Bowler's job. Born in Beaverton, Bettendorf was a Navy veteran and had been with the port since 1947.

Grounding of the freighter *Showa Maru* at Pier 3 on Feb. 9, 1956, moved Commissioner Manion to remark that there had been only three groundings at the port in 13 years. He said that \$90,000 had been spent on dredging of the slips since 1947.

On May 16, the liberty ship Frank J. Sprague was towed to the port from Cathlamet bay to load part of the 50,000,000 bushels of surplus wheat which the country had produced that season. Before the project was completed, 83 vessels would contain stored wheat in the bay.

The port budget for 1956 was set at \$637,850 and Bettendorf told the commissioners that the bonded debt was down to \$1,018,000. A report covering the operations of the Natoma since 1930 revealed that the dredge had earned a total of \$5,658,000 compared to operating costs of \$3,370,000. On June 14, Paul Moore, a Navy veteran, was named assistant port manager.

At the Nov. 3 election, Albert Rissman, a longshore official, was elected to the port commission and William Manion was named to succeed himself. Bettendorf went to Washington, D. C., in March, 1955, to oppose the efforts of the ports of Tacoma and Olympia to move the grain ships to Puget Sound.

The Natoma was awarded a contract on April 1, 1955, to dredge a portion of the Cathlamet basin on a bid of \$368,165 and tied up at the port docks for minor repairs. She would operate with a crew of 76 men under Leo Lundman and she would dump spoils on an island east of Tongue point.

The commissioners approved a budget of \$667,290 for 1956 and on July 13 accepted the resignation of Harvey Hansen who had managed the fishermen's dock for 11 years. In November, the three cranes which had handled cargo on Pier 3 were sold to Alaska Junk Co. for scrap at \$33.33 a ton.

The body of William Johnson, night watchman on the Natoma, was recovered July 30 from beneath Pier 2 where he had fallen from the gangplank during the night.

The auditors reported on Jan. 19, 1957, that traffic during 1956 had topped that of the previous five years with 231 ships taking out 328,397 tons of cargo.

On March 14, 1957, Floyd Lewis Wright, 56, president of the port commission and a vice president of Columbia River Packers Association, died suddenly after only a

brief illness. James Bowler, the former manager, was named to replace him although Commissioner Rissman favored Harry Steinbock, a local druggist.

Uptegrove Lumber company's lease was cancelled in May when officials of the firm announced it was going out of business. The port got Uptegrove's machinery at a bargain price of \$15,800.

George B. McLeod, port commissioner from 1910 to 1916, died Feb. 6, 1958, in San Francisco at the age of 87. Born in Canada, he had been with Hammond Lumber Co. for 66 years and was president of the firm at the time of his death. He had been a resident of Warrenton for 22 years prior to his death. Bert Pohl, a longshoreman, filed for a position on the port commission early in March.

Remaining staunch in their belief that the Astoria bridge would benefit the community, the commissioners voted on March 28 to ask the State Highway Department for \$12,500 to finance a preliminary ~~study~~ study of the proposed span. The Washington Department of Highways was asked to give a like sum.

At the November election, Albert Rissman was given the seat formerly held by Herbert Hacker and Manion was reelected. Manion was named port president at the meeting of Jan. 12, 1955. In April, the Natoma was given the job of dredging the reserve fleet basin on a bid of \$368,165. A crew of 46 men under Leo Lundman would handle the job.

Capt. Harvey Hansen, port basin manager for the previous 11 years, announced in July that he would retire at the end of September.

The 351-foot hopper dredge Biddle began work on the bar channel for the third summer, replacing both the Kingman and the Col. P. S. Michie. Built in 1947 at Pascagoula, Miss., the Biddle had been brought around from Galveston with a complement of 15 officers and 66 men. She still works on the bar when silt accumulates in the channel. On Aug. 24, the commissioners named Halley Johnson manager of the mooring basins from a field of 19 applicants.

Auditors reported on Jan 12, 1956, that the west

basin had lost \$138,231 in 18 years of operation and was going behind at the rate of \$11,498 annually. Faced with a repair bill of \$38,700 for pier in the basin, commissioners voted to close the roadway to trucks.

The world's largest hopper dredge, the *Essayons*, arrived in April to help the Biddle achieve a 48-foot bar channel after the Bureau of the Budget released \$750,000 for improvement of the waterway. Northwest Marine Iron Works took on the job of repairing the *Natoma* after the Coast Guard declared the hull plates too thin to stay afloat.

At the meeting of May 15, 1957, the commissioners voted to redeem \$40,000 of the outstanding bonds and Kissman moved that the planking on Pier 2 be replaced with a dirt fill.

The port's bonded debt stood at \$646,000 at the beginning of 1958 and the budget committee reported in with a figure of \$729,530 for 1959 expenditures. Bettendorf said the *Natoma* was earning \$165 per hour.

On Jan 1, 1959, Paul Moore resigned as assistant manager after four and a half years with the port. A new firm, Port Plywood Corporation, leased the Uptegrove building in April. In December, the commission voted to issue \$75,000 in revenue bonds to pay for shoring up Pier 2 where Zidell Explorations planned to scrap two surplus aircraft carriers, the Steamer Bay and the Fanshawe Bay. On Dec. 9, the port leased space adjacent to the west basin to Ellsworth Thiel for use as a restaurant.

The grain elevator was leased in April, 1960, to Pacific Grain Growers on a month to month basis and in August William Hess was hired as port office manager. In October, Bettendorf reported that the *Natoma* had earned \$647,521 for the year against operating costs of \$567,613. The aging dredge was rapidly becoming the sole support of the port.

Two days after Christmas of 1960, James Convill, one-time city manager of Astoria and former port commissioner, died in Medford at the age of 76.

At a port meeting on May 24, 1961, the budget for 1962 was set at \$1,000,210. Officials of Pillsbury Flour Co. said in August they were phasing out the Astoria operation and would close the mill at the port on Dec. 1. Another blow to Astoria came on Sept. 9 when the Navy declared the Tongue point naval station surplus and scheduled its closure in Jan. 1962.

Bettendorf reported on Dec. 6, 1962, that no money was available from the government for repair of the port docks, a project which longshoremen had demanded a month before. On the same day, William P. O'Brien, former port commissioner and retired lumberman, died at the age of 83.

George Gray, partner in a Seaside logging firm, was sworn in as a member of the port commission and Albert Rissman began his second term. John Mercer was named to handle port business in Portland.

On March 5, 1963, the commissioners authorized issuance of \$400,000 in general obligation bonds and \$2.2 million in improvement bonds with First National Bank of Oregon submitting the most favorable bid.

Following the retirement of William Manion after 12 years on the commission, the membership remained the same until January, 1965, when three new members were seated.

Elected the previous November were James Campbell, Howard Johnson and Frank Hoagland. They joined Commissioners Rissman and Fluhrer and with one exception the membership remained the same through 1974. Russell Fluhrer was defeated at the 1972 election by Capt. Martin West, a Columbia River Bar Pilot.

Richard Bettendorf tendered his resignation early in 1966 and was replaced on March 3 by C. E. "Ted" Hodges, a veteran terminal superintendent. Hodges had worked in shipping at Longview and Seattle prior to taking over management of the Albina docks in Portland, a job he held for 20 years.

A week after Hodges took over, the commissioners voted to sponsor a seafood laboratory to be operated in Astoria

by Oregon State University. Expenditure of \$18,333 was authorized for construction of a pier at the foot of 17th St. which would serve as a home port for the cutter Yocona and an anchorage for Lightship 88, recently purchased by the Columbia River Maritime Museum.

The Coast Guard moved its air station from Tongue point to Clatsop airport in April, 1966, and on the 13th dedicated a \$450,000 headquarters for Coast Guard Group Astoria. This station was to serve as command post for the nine satellite stations along the Oregon-Washington coast.

The last concrete was poured on the deck of the Astoria bridge on July 27, 1966, and the span was opened for public use at 6 A. M. two days later. The \$24,000,000 bridge was scheduled for dedication on August 27.

Manager Hodges reported to the commission on Jan. 11, 1967, that the port had handled more than a million tons of cargo during 1966. Encouraged by the report, commissioners approved an issue of \$2,000,000 in reconstruction bonds to rehabilitate the aging port docks.

At the end of March, Sunset Crushed Rock Co. completed an L-shaped dike extending 300 feet west of Pier 3 at a cost of \$64,400. The Natoma was to fill this area and a 200 by 400-foot space at the base of Slip 2. The lease held by Port Plywood Corp. was cancelled April 12. The firm had been closed for eight months and \$8,000 arrears in the rent.

Lured by the promise of cheap electric power, Northwest Aluminum Co. expressed an interest in May in 850 acres of land south of Warrenton owned by Pacific Power & Light Co. The aluminum firm was to purchase the tract a year later for \$110,395.

Talks between the port and Northwest Aluminum finally resulted on Aug. 12, 1967, in the commissioners voting to issue \$142,000,000 in bonds to construct a plant for the aluminum firm. Protesting this bond issue, Eben Carruthers filed a courtsuit to test its legality, a suit which was to reach the supreme court in January, 1968.

Capt. Robert Lawlis, retired from the Coast Guard,

took over management of the port's mooring basins, a post he still holds in 1974. The date was Sept. 11, 1967.

On March 20, 1968, the Oregon supreme court affirmed the right of the port to issue bonds to aid private industry.

The surplus transport Gen. R. L. Howze, last ship in the reserve fleet at Cathlamet bay, departed April 17, 1968, and on June 12, Portland and Astoria ports signed a joint lease to hold the former basin for future development.

On July 22, Port of Astoria purchased 1100 acres of partly submerged land along the Skipanon river from Clatsop county for \$75,000. Another \$30,250 went to Horton Construction Co. in September for paving the area at the base of the port piers. The millionth car crossed Astoria bridge on Oct. 14, 1968.

Bell Intercontinental Corp., parent firm of Northwest Aluminum Co., advised the port not to issue the proposed bonds.

Rebuilding of the port docks was completed Jan. 22, 1969, after four years of work and an expenditure of almost \$3,000,000 and a month later the freighter Star Cariboo ploughed into the face of Pier 2, causing \$200,000 damage. On March 12, the port signed an agreement with Kerr Grain Corp. which permitted that firm to operate the port elevator.

A sagging market for aluminum and growing opposition from a group calling itself the Clatsop Environmental Council delayed construction of the aluminum plant though workmen continued clearing and grading at the Warrenton site. Counter suits between the port and Barbey Packing Corp. over passage easements were finally settled after the port gave up attempts to collect wharfage fees for Barbey's dock operation.

On Oct. 15, Hodges told commissioners the port was now behind by \$125,000 due to purchase of land and legal fees involving the aluminum firm.

Late in 1969, the port sued the Sea Fare restaurant in an ouster attempt and in turn was sued by the operators

in an attempt to renew a five year lease. The port won on both counts of the argument and on Dec. 22 leased the restaurant to Thunderbird Corp., operator of motor inns. The facility was rebuilt later at a cost to the port of \$150,000 and Thunderbird built a two-story motel along two sides of the west morring basin.

On Jan. 11, 1970, the port regained the railroad rate parity it had lost the year before and in May longshoremen closed the port for 18 days.

Discouraged by lack of financing, Northwest Aluminum began talks on July 10 with American Metals Climax with an intent to involve that firm in a partnership in constructing the warrenton plant. Not content with a partnership, directors of American Metals Climax approved purchase of the Warrenton site on Sept. 4, 1970, and ~~and~~ signed a contract with Bonneville Power Administration on the same terms granted to Northwest Aluminum Co.

The port was ordered on Oct. 14 to stop dumping dredge spoils in Youngs bay and later was enjoined from dumping anywhere in the Columbia river.

Suit was filed on Nov. 11 against Northwest Aluminum in an attempt to recover some \$46,000 which the port had expended in legal fees. In December, Hodges settled a wage disagreement with the port's maintenance crew which had dragged on for four months.

Rees Williams, assistant port manager since 1968, resigned early in 1972 to become manager of a tugboat firm at Richmond, Cal. He was replaced by Harvey Wardrip who in turn left the port early in 1973.

On July 12, 1972, port commissioners endorsed the concept of a Columbia river superport, a project which had been proposed years before by Commissioner Kissman. The Coast Guard announced plans for major expansion at Clatsop airport with construction to begin in the spring of 1974. In May, two Japanese firms signed contracts with Port Westward, a new shipping facility near Clatskanie. Manager Hodges told commissioners that this move would take away 48 per cent of the port's log shipping traffic.

"Ted" Hodges announced his retirement in July, 1972, but was persuaded to stay on while the commissioners searched for a replacement. They found one early in October.

George Grove, a marketing specialist with the Port of Portland, signed a contract with the port on Oct. 6 and began his new duties Nov. 1, 1972.

Ray Holbrook was added to the staff as assistant Manager and Gail Packard, port representative in Portland, was moved to Astoria to become traffic manager in the new regime. The port had come a long way during six decades.

The three piers are in operation today although they are still plagued by the silting problem. The giant span across the Columbia, once sponsored by the port, is in daily use.

Tongue Point Naval Station served its wartime purpose and was converted to a job training center for underprivileged youth. The mothball fleet left long ago for the scrap yards and Cathlamet Bay holds only an empty expanse of water, its once busy pier rotting in the salt-laden mists. The Biddle keeps the shoal channel at a depth of 48 feet.

The Natoma rested awhile in the east basin before junk dealers finally picked her bones. A 1973 hearing on the basin, conducted by Army Engineers, produced grandiose plans but lack of funds prevented additional work on the breakwater. The steam crane of which the early commissioners were so proud stands rusting on its bit of track at the base of Pier 2, monument to an earlier day of shipping.

In 1974, a Japanese firm, Mitsui Mining Co., Ltd., took a lease option on the port owned land along the Skipanon which may some day repay the port's \$75,000 purchase.

Once again history has repeated itself since the Mitsui development is only a few hundred yards from the Flavel site where Louis Hill planned to establish a shipping empire in 1915.

Under a forward-looking commission and the management of George Grove, the Port of Astoria seems destined to see the bright pot of gold which the gamblers who founded it predicted 60 years ago.

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